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'Rabin murder planned two years ago'
TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's murder was planned as long as two years ago by a Jewish terror cell, with the support of far-right elements determined to hold on to the West Bank, Israeli police chief said. "The murder was planned for two years by a hand core which was created by a certain number of people who were only partially aware of it," he said in a statement carried by Israeli radio on Friday. He said the file was "almost closed" and that police did not expect more arrests, following the confessions of assassin Yigal Amir and others who have been detained since the murder at a Tel Aviv peace rally on Nov. 4. The police are holding seven suspected conspirators, including Amir (see page 12). "It's certain that the murder was perpetrated by a small terrorist core and not a powerful clandestine organisation... But that makes it even more worrying for Israeli society," said an expert on far-right groups. "If it was a secret organisation, the security services would not have had much trouble dismantling it," Professor Ehud Sprinzak of Jerusalem's Hebrew University told AFP. "But it is difficult to strike when you are dealing with a cluster of small groups or individuals," he said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية - الراي

King, Crown Prince congratulate Zeroual
AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday sent a cable to Algerian President Liamine Zeroual congratulating him on his victory in his country's first free presidential election. "I and the Jordanian people received with overwhelming joy news about your winning the democratic presidential election in the dear Algeria," King Hussein said in his cable. "As I wish you luck in your coming presidential mandate, I implore God the Almighty that your free election will be a main step on leading Algeria out of its crisis and retrieving its long-aspired and honourable role within its Arab Nation," the King added. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan sent President Zeroual a similar cable congratulating him on his win and the Algerian people on the free democratic election. Prince Hassan voiced hope that this democratic election will signal an end to the cycle of violence which plagued Algeria for the past years, and will enable the Arab country to resume its prominent role within its Arab and Islamic nations. President Zeroual beat three other candidates with 61.34 per cent of the vote for a new five-year mandate.

Zeroual sweeps to victory in Algerian presidential polls

ALGIERS (Agence) — Former General Liamine Zeroual swept to victory as Algeria's elected president with results announced on Friday giving him an outright win over his three rivals. In an election seen by the authorities as the first step to getting Algeria out of four years of bloodshed and conflict with militants, Interior Minister Mustapha Ben Mensour said over seven million of 12 million voters backed Mr. Zeroual. The newly-elected president, speaking shortly after the result, said: "The elections were a victory to the sovereignty of the people and true democracy in our country and a lesson to its enemies inside and outside Algeria."

Mr. Zeroual, who has cracked down on rebels but tried to negotiate with detained militant leaders, has pledged to pursue dialogue with the opposition and create a pluralist democracy. Saying he treasured the confidence shown in him, he said: "I will work hard... to be the president of all Algerians men and women to build together all of us this Algeria and achieve all our ambitions."

Mr. Ben Mensour told an Algiers news conference that Mr. Zeroual, 54, who has been unelected leader since January 1994, won 61.34 per cent of Thursday's election. Thousands of security forces were deployed for the vote because of militant threats to disrupt it, and a boycott call by the main legal parties.

After results were announced, his supporters took to the streets waving Algerian flags while members of the security forces fired sub-machineguns into the air in celebration.

The streets of the capital echoed to the sound of men, many of them soldiers and police officers, letting off rounds of celebratory pistol and machine gun fire. Women ululated as cars draped in the national green, white and red flag, cruised the streets, their drivers honking their horns.

A credible turnout was considered crucial to any attempt by Mr. Zeroual to use the election to strengthen his hand in confronting the extremists.

Mr. Zeroual's closest rival, Islamist Mahfoud Nahnah took 25.38 per cent of valid votes, with anti-Islamist Said Sandi trailing at 9.29 per cent and Islamist intellectual Nouredine Boukrouh 3.78 per cent.

Mr. Ben Mensour said the final turnout in the election was 74.92 per cent, a figure quickly disputed by the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) which had called for a boycott and said in Paris the real figure was less than half that.

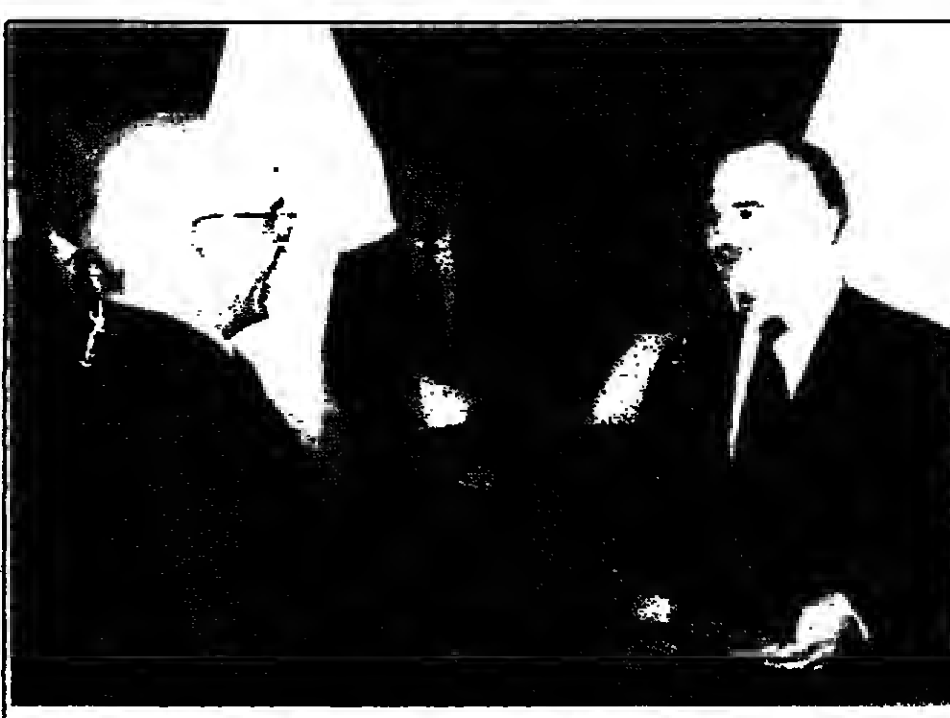
International observers arriving back here from different parts of Algeria said they were happy with the way the country's first presidential election had been conducted.

Hussein Al Kamel, the head of a seven-member United Nations monitoring team, said there was no question of the result being in doubt in any way.

"The election was free. We congratulate the Algerian people on completing their democratic process," he told AFP.

"We ended our mission today by observing hundreds of polling stations," he said adding that a report would be presented to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali.

Alvaro da Silva, a representative from Mozambique working for a team of observers from the Organisation of African Unity, said: "It all went very well. There was a very high participation rate. The election was handled



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan is sworn in as Regent in the presence of His Majesty King Hussein before the King, Queen leave for London (Petra photo)

King, Queen leave for London

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor left for London on Friday on a several-day working visit to the United Kingdom. They were seen off at the airport by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma and members of the royal family. Also bidding farewell to them were Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the speaker of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Oasem, Private Chamberlain Prince Ali Ben Navef, the King's advisors, cabinet ministers and senior military and civil officials, in addition to the British ambassador to Jordan.

King Hussein and Queen Noor were accompanied by Their Royal Highnesses Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, Prince Talal Ben Mohammad, the King's military secretary and Princess Ghida Talal, and the King's advisors Mohammed Rasoul Al Kilani and Yanal Hikmat. Prince Hassan was sworn in to serve as Regent during the King's absence.

In a television programme King Hussein said early Friday the forthcoming era will bring to Jordan and the Jordanians progress and prosperity.

In a telephone conversation with Jordan TV's weekly morning programme broadcast every Friday, King Hussein said Jordanians would have the opportunity to excel in all fields and to live up to the challenges.

He voiced hope that Jordan would become an example and ideal for the others in the Arab World through pursuing the path of democracy, political pluralism and respect for human rights.

King Hussein stressed the importance of people's participation in charting the road to the future and shouldering responsibility in building their country.

Israel to quit Bethlehem early for Christmas

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli soldiers will leave Bethlehem three days earlier than planned to allow preparations for the first Christmas under Palestinian control in 28 years, Palestinian officials said on Friday. "The Israelis will leave Bethlehem on the 18th of December," Major General Nasr Yousef, head of Palestinian forces in Gaza and the West Bank, told Reuters. Israel is redeploying troops from six West Bank towns and part of Hebron under an agreement signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in September to extend Palestinian self-rule from Gaza and Jericho. Elections to a Palestinian council to run most aspects of life in these areas follow in late January.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Ahmad Qouria confirmed the timetable change had been agreed with the Israelis.

"On the 28th of December the election campaigns start, so this means redeployment will conclude on Dec. 26 from Ramallah and the villages near Hebron," he said.

Israel's acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres has vowed to implement all deals with the PLO sealed by his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin, assassinated by a right-wing Jew on Nov. 4.

Israel lifted a closure of Jenin on Friday imposed as its soldiers left the northern West Bank town on Monday. Jenin residents, who depend heavily on cross-border Israeli Arab shoppers, welcomed the move.

"We don't depend on the local citizens but upon the Israelis who are well-to-do," said merchant Mohammad Hasan, 60.



Algerians celebrate in the streets of Algiers the victory of Liamine Zeroual in presidential elections (AFP photo)

(Continued on page 7)

Queen pays tribute to UNICEF director

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor on Friday bid farewell to the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regional director, Mrs. Sarojina Vittachi, at Al Nadwa Palace. Queen Noor expressed her appreciation on behalf of Jordan for Mrs. Vittachi's work at UNICEF and, in particular for her personal commitment to the welfare of the country's children. Mrs. Vittachi praised Queen Noor's leadership role and support of children's rights as well as her establishment and chairmanship of the national task force for children, which is dedicated to keeping children's issues a national priority. Mrs. Vittachi, who is retiring from UNICEF after 21 years of service — half of which was spent in the Middle East, was UNICEF's representative in Jordan in the late 1980s. During that time, she headed the UNICEF team that worked with the Jordanian government on the universal immunisation of children and the eradication of diseases. As UNICEF's MENA regional director, she focused on "bringing countries, people and non-governmental organisations around education for peace and tolerance."

Mrs. Vittachi will continue to work for the causes she has espoused during her long impressive career, particularly the impact of war on children.

Peres surges far ahead of Netanyahu in opinion poll

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has raced ahead of his main right-wing Likud rival Benjamin Netanyahu winning 60 per cent support in a poll published Friday. Mr. Netanyahu would poll only 28 per cent of the vote if elections were held now while 12 per cent said they had not made up their minds, according to the poll of 500 people published in the right-wing daily Maariv.

The figures are up on last week when Mr. Peres was backed by 54 per cent of people questioned for a poll in the daily Yediot Aharonot, with the Likud leader gaining 23 per cent support.

Mr. Netanyahu's popularity has plunged since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4. After the murder he was publicly criticised for whipping up a hate campaign against Mr. Rabin. Three months ago Mr. Rabin and Mr. Netanyahu were neck and neck in the polls.

The next general elections are due to be held on Oct. 29, 1996, when for the first time the prime minister is due to be directly elected.

Mr. Peres was officially appointed prime minister late Wednesday by President Ezer Weizman and is due to announce his new cabinet line-up on Tuesday.

"Tuesday, on the eve of presenting my cabinet, I will say everything I have to say," Mr. Peres told journalists as he went into a meeting of the Labour Party leadership in Tel Aviv.

But he added: "I am not sure that I will be able to enlarge the base of the government."

Speculation has been rife over the new composition of the government, even before Mr. Peres was named to succeed Mr. Rabin.

Although Mr. Peres' appointment came as no surprise, analysts have been trying to second guess the new cabinet make-up.

Mr. Peres has only said that he will keep either his post under Mr. Rabin as fore-



Shimon Peres

Party, which has six deputies, has said it could support the government on certain issues.

Mr. Zivli said: "We will stay more or less with the same coalition but with an opposition which hopefully will be less extremist."

It is likely Mr. Peres will keep the defence portfolio, like Mr. Rabin before him, and concede his post of foreign minister, possibly to outgoing Interior Minister Ehud Barak, a former army chief-of-staff.

Mr. Barak said Thursday that he was ready to take on any job "assigned to me, because I have worked for 12 years on political issues and ultra-sensitive questions of national security."

The popular head of the powerful trade union federation Histadrut, Haim Ramon, who this week announced his return to the Labour fold, is a contender for the interior ministry portfolio.

According to state radio, Mr. Beilin, who is close to Mr. Peres, could become a minister without portfolio while Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Sheireet would take over economy.

Deputy Foreign Minister Elit Dayan could move to religious affairs.

Mr. Peres has also met with General Ori Orr, head of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs and defence, who could succeed Mr. Dayan as deputy defence minister.

Arab League warning

The Arab League warned Mr. Peres against continuing the "stalling" policies of Mr. Rabin in the peace process or risk suffering the same fate.

"What is required of Peres is to get directly to the heart of the matter and respect U.N. resolutions" demanding an end to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Golan Heights and South Lebanon, deputy League Secretary Adnan Omran said.

The two orthodox groups together have 10 deputies in the Knesset.

The National Religious

Israeli Arab team ends visit voicing support for Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing the Democratic Front for Peace in Israel's parliament on Friday concluded a several-day visit to Jordan and left for home. The delegation, led by Hashem Mahamid, was on Thursday received by His Majesty King Hussein to whom they presented gifts on his 60th birthday and voiced the front's total support for King Hussein's peace endeavours.

King Hussein in a brief address delivered at the meeting with the delegation, attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, thanked the front for its support and voiced his pride in the Palestinian Arab community for their continued efforts to promote the cause of peace.

"We are all duty-bound to seek a comprehensive peace in the region and to step up efforts to consolidate the security and peace achieved so far," said the King, who also voiced total support for the Palestinian people's struggle to regain their full rights on their national soil.

The King voiced Jordan's total commitment to peace saying the Kingdom would continue to stand firm in the face of all actions by the enemies of peace, who, he said, want to undermine the peace process.

"The enemies of peace," said the King, "will not be able to extinguish the light of life and the right of the coming generations to free life."

Mr. Mahamid delivered an address expressing the delegation's good wishes to the King on his birthday and expressed support for the King's efforts to help the Palestinians regain their rights.

He said his parliamentary front, which groups Jews and Arabs, seeks equality and peace and is fighting against discrimination against the Arabs in Israel.

According to Mr. Mahamid, Israeli Arabs who numbered 150,000 in 1948 now numbers 800,000, all supporting peace and are steadfast in their adherence to their national soil in Palestine.

Referring to Yitzhak Rabin's assassination, Mr. Mahamid said that the bullets were directed at the peace process, adding that the Israeli Arabs hope that the coming stage will witness progress on all tracks so that peace can be comprehensive.

The delegation were also received by Speaker of the Senate Ahmad Lawzi, who outlined Jordan's parliamentary life and discussed the peace process.

Arafat challenges

A Hebron businessman, previously unknown to Palestinian politics, declared on Friday he would challenge PLO head Yasser Arafat in Palestinian elections.

"My motive for running for the presidency against Mr. Arafat is serving the public as dictated by my religion and according to my conscience," Ali Ishak Khaled Al Tamimi, 40, who described himself as a devout Muslim, told Reuters.

Mr. Tamimi is the first Palestinian to declare he will run against Mr. Arafat. Hebron residents said Mr. Tamimi owned an electronics store in town and was rich but

(Continued on page 7)

UAE, Iran hold talks on dispute

DOHA (AFP) — Iranian and United Arab Emirates (UAE) officials arrived in Qatar on Friday for talks on their countries' dispute over three islands in the Gulf, after a three-year break, diplomats said. They said Doha, which has good ties with Tehran and Abu Dhabi, had been mediating for the past four months. The talks on the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb, due to start on Saturday, will be their first official negotiations since September 1992 when a session in Abu Dhabi broke up without agreement.

'Ultimate' channel

LONDON (AFP) — British satellite service — which bills itself as the "ultimate" sex channel — was Tuesday announced here by the government.

Heritage Secretary, Lord Mervyn Dymally announced the launch of XXXTV, a new programme line-up, advertising or soft-core pornography channel, previously as TV Erotica.

Clinton sends Congress stopgap bill

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton on Friday sent Congress his own stopgap funding bill to end the shutdown of the federal government.

Repeating his vow to veto a second temporary funding bill backed by Republicans, Mr. Clinton said his proposal reflects "my desire to approve promptly a clean extension" of federal funding.

"I urge the Congress to act on this legislation promptly and to return it to me for signing," Mr. Clinton said in a message to Congress.

The Clinton proposal also provides language that would commit the government to pay all 800,000 federal employees who were furloughed this week.

The White House said earlier Friday there were positive signs of movement in the budget impasse with the Congress, which has partially shut down the U.S. government.

"A lot of ideas are now floating," White House spokesman Michael McCurry told reporters.

Saudi blast probe could take a long time — diplomat

RIYADH (Agencies) — U.S. investigators sifting through the debris here Friday of a bombing which killed six people face a long and complex search for those behind the attack, an official said.

"Explosives experts from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are at the parking lot where the explosion occurred to recover any evidence that could lead to the authors" of the attack, a Western diplomat close to the investigation said.

According to the official, who preferred to remain anonymous, "the search will be long and difficult, especially if the perpetrators left the country."

A spokesman for the U.S. embassy would not comment on the investigation, saying only: "We don't have the habit of making the slightest comment on an ongoing FBI investigation."

A car bomb on Monday ripped through U.S. military offices used to train the Saudi National Guard in Riyadh, killing five Americans and one Indian and wounding 60 other people.

No arrests have been made yet in the investigation, the diplomat said, but witnesses are being regularly interviewed by Saudi officials.

FBI agents arrived in Riyadh on Monday to help Saudi officials investigate the bombing.

The U.S. embassy here issued a State Department warning urging Americans to keep a low profile, limit travel, avoid local marketplaces and public streets as well as take care in opening mail.

There are an estimated 35,000 Americans living in Saudi Arabia.

One American in Riyadh said Friday she was "terrified" after the attack. "Since then, I will not send my children to school until the situation is more clear."

Iran has denied involvement in the bombing, and accused the American ambassador in Saudi Arabia of seeking to undermine the already tense Tehran-Riyadh ties.

In a statement Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad Mohammadi said: "Iran has no connection whatsoever to Monday's blast in the Saudi capital."

Mr. Mohammadi claimed that Ambassador Raymond Mabus was making allegations "in order to justify the U.S. military presence in the region and in Muslim countries."

Mr. Mabus has not directly blamed Iran for the attack. But in interviews Wednesday, he was asked about the possibility of an Iranian connection.

"I have an open mind. It might have been the one involved," he replied. "Saudi Arabia has bad neighbours."

Mr. Mohammadi, whose statement was carried by the Islamic Republic News Agency, said the "American ambassador is trying to sow discord among Persian Gulf states."

Iran's government is known to oppose the American military presence in the

(Continued on page 7)

Sanctions are genocide, Iraq tells world body

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Iraq said here Thursday that continued U.N. sanctions against it amounted to a "war of genocide" against its population.

The U.N. Security Council upheld the sweeping economic sanctions imposed on Baghdad in 1990 at its regular review meeting on November 8, after new disclosures failed to satisfy its concerns about Iraq's programmes for weapons of mass destruction.

The council reiterated its offer to allow Iraq to swap a limited amount of oil for food and medicine, which Baghdad has repeatedly rejected. Iraq has said it will accept the offer, known as Resolution 986, only the terms were changed.

"It is high time for the Security Council to take concrete decisions to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and terminate this ongoing genocide against the people of Iraq," a statement released here from the Iraqi mission to the United Nations said.

"The continuation of a

comprehensive package of economic sanctions against Iraq that includes in default the supply of foodstuffs and medicines, by denying revenue resources, is tantamount to a war of genocide," it said.

The Iraqis distributed data showing that an average of 122,500 citizens have died for various reasons every year since the sanctions were imposed in 1990, compared to only 27,334 deaths in 1989. It did not say how many deaths were incurred in fighting during the Gulf war nor how those numbers affected the yearly averages.

"The nutritional situation of the children under five years of age is particularly alarming," the statement said, citing malnutrition and vitamin deficiencies among 7.73 million people.

Members of the Security Council, particularly the United States and Britain, have repeatedly said that if Iraq wants to improve the humanitarian conditions of its civilian population it must accept the oil-for-food resolution.

Saudi prince's guards locked in row in Cairo

CAIRO (AFP) — Police laid siege to a brother of Saudi King Fahd in a five-star hotel here on Thursday until the surrender of members of his private bodyguard who beat up two Egyptians, police and hotel workers said.

Some 100 police circled the Ramesses Hilton for more than 12 hours before an American, John Muller, and a Frenchman, identified only as Bernard, two of Prince Turki Beo Abdul Aziz's bodyguards, gave themselves up.

Bernard, the head of the prince's 140-man guard, and Muller beat up two Egyptian brothers outside the hotel on Sunday and sprayed them with a gas canister, police and hotel workers said.

Four days later, police surrounded the hotel and closed off the three floors of the towering hotel in downtown Cairo that Prince Turki has rented and occupied for more than three years.

Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali told journalists earlier he had ordered some of the bodyguards arrested for deportation and their names placed on a black list banning reentry into Egypt.

The remainder of the prince's guards would have their weapons' licences revoked, Mr. Ali said.

"We will not permit transgressions of the law by bodyguards protecting foreign figures," he said.

"This wasn't the first time

the prince's security made trouble, they've caused fights here before," one member of the hotel staff who asked not to be named told AFP.

"The guards have weapons upstairs, although they don't carry them visibly when they come down to the lobby," he said.

A crowd of Egyptians gathered outside the hotel on Thursday to demonstrate against the Saudi royal, who is in his 60s, the staffer said.

The staffer, who witnessed the attack on Sunday, said it started when two Egyptian brothers started arguing with the prince's drivers, who had blocked the entrance to the hotel.

"The drivers called up to Prince Turki's security and told them there was a fight, so Bernard and one other man came right down," he said.

Bernard "didn't say a word, he just ran up and punched (one of the brothers) in the face. Then they ran after the other who was trying to get away and beat him up. Then they sprayed them with a gas canister because they were fighting back."

"No one here wants him. It's better if he left the country but at least he must leave the hotel," he said.

The assistant manager of the Ramesses Hilton, Amr Ganuni, said, "It has not been decided what measures to take" with the prince.

Assad celebrates 25 years in power

(Continued from page 12)

to more tension and violence, which will not spare anyone as shown by recent developments."

"His comment was seen as a reference to the Rabin assassination."

"There will be no peace so long as Israel has not withdrawn from the Golan back to the borders of June 4, 1967, from South Lebanon and Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem," said Mr. Ahamar.

"Syria will confront the projects of Israel aimed at dividing the Arabs and suppressing their national identity, grabbing their riches and

imposing its hegemony" on the Middle East.

Israel said Thursday that an upcoming visit by U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross would help determine if the stalled talks with Syria could be put back on track.

"We should be in a position to judge what the chances are of reopening the negotiations with the Syrians after the visit of Dennis Ross," who is due to arrive late Saturday, acting Prime Minister Peres told reporters.

"For our part, we remain very serious in our willingness and readiness to negotiate with the Syrians so as to arrive at a full peace in the Middle East."



UNDER GUARD: An Israeli soldier escorts Jewish settlers passing the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron. According to the Sept. 28 agreement signed between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel, the Israeli army will evacuate Hebron, where 400 settlers live among 120,000 Palestinians, by March 1996. In the meantime, the army would continue to keep control of security in Hebron (AFP photo)

Palestinians accuse Israelis of interfering in voter campaign

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinian officials complained Thursday that Israeli soldiers were interfering with efforts to register voters for upcoming elections in the West Bank and Gaza.

Feras Yaghi, head of a registration centre in Hebron, told the Associated Press that armed soldiers collected personal data from at least 25 families in the area claiming it was a registration.

"This is a disturbance of our work," he said. In addition, a group of Palestinian school teachers — among some 7,000 carrying out the registration drive — said they were prevented by soldiers from reaching a balloting centre in Hebron.

Saeed Erakat, the Palestinian official in charge of local government, said he sent Israel an official complaint and raised the issue in talks with the Israelis Thursday night.

The Israeli army denied knowledge of misleading by its soldiers.

A delegation of four observers from the National Democratic Institute (NDI), affiliated with the U.S. Democratic Party, told a news conference they investigated the charges but came up empty.

"We have no evidence that suggests soldiers interfered with the process," said

Sakaumzi Macozoma, a South African legislator and member of the NDI delegation. But he urged the Israeli government to better brief soldiers about the election process.

According to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement, the registration is to be carried out by Palestinians and not Israelis in order to lend the Jan. 20 vote more credibility in the eyes of Arab voters. The Palestinians are to elect an 82-member parliament and a chairman of the Palestinian National Authority.

Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli foreign ministry, said a Palestinian-Israeli committee will be meeting soon to discuss security procedures for the elections in Hebron.

"We will do everything to facilitate the very effective work of the Palestinian Authority regarding the elections," Mr. Savir said following a meeting with top Palestinian officials Thursday. "I am sure the Palestinians will do everything to implement it exactly according to the agreement."

Mr. Savir met with Palestinian Economics Minister Ahmad Qouria and other delegates in the West Bank town of Ramallah just north of Jerusalem. The two sides

discussed the elections and other facets of implementing the Israel-PLO accord signed in September.

The Palestinians told the Israeli delegation that some 1,200 people had already submitted their names as candidates for the 82-member Palestinian governing council, an Israeli foreign ministry statement said following the meeting.

Israeli troops evacuated Jenin last week — a week ahead of schedule — and are to depart Nablus, Tulkarem, Kalkilya, Ramallah and Bethlehem by year's end. Troops will remain in Hebron, however, during the election; they are to withdraw from the town, where 450 Jews live among 120,000 Palestinians, by March.

Karen Shepherd of NDI noted the Palestinians still faced logistical problems such as a lack of ID cards for registration officials and a shortage of registration materials.

But Palestinian sources said tens of thousands out of an estimated 1.2 million eligible voters have already been registered since the drive began on Sunday — despite appeals by two hardline factions for a boycott of the election.

The Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Li-

beration of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) both oppose the Israel-PLO peace process, claiming it does not guarantee the Palestinians full statehood.

The main opposition to the PLO chief Yasser Arafat, the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas group, appears to be keeping its options open about possible participation in the vote.

"I do not call on Palestinians to boycott the election, but I will not participate without true sovereignty and genuine authorities," said Jamil Hamami, a Hamas spokesman in Jerusalem.

In a debate in Jerusalem Thursday, Faisal Husseini, the top PLO official in the city, argued the elections will gain the Palestinian National Authority greater legitimacy.

"The world will only recognise this elected council," Mr. Hussein said.

But Abdul Latif Gheith, a senior PFLP leader, insisted it "annihilates the PLO... Without achieving independence, sovereignty (or) the refugees' right to return."

Talks about a final Israeli-Palestinian settlement, in which the PLO is expected to demand full statehood, are to begin in May.

NEWS IN BRIEF

PLO takes over West Bank censorship

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel handed over control to the Palestinian self-rule authority of censorship rights over the media in the West Bank on Thursday, the military administration said. The administration's spokesman, Lieutenant Peter Lerner, said the self-rule authority would have censorship rights over the press, books, television, radio, films and the theatre. Israel will retain its censorship in annexed East Jerusalem where several Palestinian newspapers are published, he noted. Eighteen out of 40 civil powers in the West Bank have now been handed over.

8 Palestinians get up to eight years in Israeli jail

RAMALLAH (AFP) — An Israeli military court on Thursday sentenced seven Palestinians to between five to eight years in jail for throwing petrol bombs, state radio said. The militants from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) were sentenced by the military court in Ramallah. Apart from their membership of the PFLP, they were accused of making the explosives and throwing them at military vehicles.

Japanese soldiers set to arrive on Golan

BEIRUT (AFP) — Japan is to send a unit of 35 soldiers to join U.N. peacekeepers on the Golan Heights "very soon," a Japanese official said during a visit to Lebanon on Thursday. The unit will replace a Canadian contingent of the Damascus-based U.N. disengagement observer force on the Golan Heights, said Kojiro Takano, head of Japan's International Cooperation Bureau. Japan decided in August to take part in the U.N. mission for a period of two years starting in February. The scope and timetable of an Israeli withdrawal on the Golan, as well as the accompanying security arrangements, are the main stumbling-blocks in peace talks between the Jewish state and Syria.

Yemen arrests 15, seizes arms, explosives

ADEN (AP) — Authorities in Yemen on Thursday arrested 10 people, seizing arms and explosives they allegedly planned to use in attacks on economic and touristic sites. Anti-government leaflets and pornographic material were also found in their possession, a security official said. The official, who declined to be named, said authorities last week arrested a group of five men who also had explosives in their possession. The official said both groups worked for southern Yemenis who have lived in exile abroad since their bid to secede was crushed by the northern-based Yemeni army last year.

Greek-Cypriot shot after in buffer zone

NICOSIA (AFP) — Turkish-Cypriots shot and wounded a Greek-Cypriot who burst through the island's buffer zone in a car in a bid to return to his home village after 20 years, the Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK said Friday. It said Yiannis Apostolides crossed the green line which has divided the island since 1974 in a four-wheel vehicle on Thursday and ignored warnings to stop before Turkish-Cypriot forces shot him. He was being given medical treatment and would later be questioned, the agency said. Mr. Apostolides first drove through a Greek-Cypriot barrage on the other side, to the east of Nicosia. He told guards, "I want to go to my village," Greek-Cypriot newspapers said. The incident follows tension on the island after Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot rival demonstrators hurled rocks at each other on Wednesday, the anniversary of a 1983 declaration of a breakaway Turkish republic of northern Cyprus. A Greek-Cypriot soldier, George Karotaskis, has been detained since Nov. 3 when he crossed the buffer zone to smoke a cigarette with Turkish-Cypriot forces. His detention sparked the angry demonstrations. The Greek-Cypriots have called on the U.N. peacekeeping force on the island to help secure the return of both men.

Fill in Suez Canal and build a railway line — candidate

CAIRO (AFP) — A candidate in Egypt's parliamentary elections called for the Suez Canal to be filled in because of falling revenues and a railway line built in its place, the opposition weekly Al Arabi reported on Thursday.

Abdul Ati Sayad, an independent candidate from the canal town of Fayad said: "New alternatives to the canal must be considered" after "the lowering in its earnings due to the alternative use of the Suez oil pipeline and the threat of numerous Israeli projects to replace it."

The Suez Canal carries oil from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, the same route as the canal.

Israeli proposals of building a canal from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea have often been condemned in the Egyptian press as a bid by the Jewish state to bankrupt the canal with an alternative sea route to the Mediterranean.

"After filling in the canal,

a modern train line could be established to carry merchandise, oil, silk and fabrics" between the two seas, Mr. Sayad said.

Mr. Sayad said the canal "was a Zionist project which aimed to separate Egypt from the Sinai," pointing out that its digging, completed in 1869, "coincided with the beginning of the Zionist project in Palestine."

The architect of the canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps, "was a Zionist agent," he added.

The Suez Canal Agency (SCA) lowered passage rates for oil tankers 20 per cent starting this month to attract customers back to the canal where traffic dipped 10 per cent for the first half of 1995.

An SCA official blamed the lower traffic on Suez, which is 50-per cent owned by Egypt, while Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates split ownership of the rest.

Egypt's legislative elections are set for Nov. 29.

Women candidates in Egyptian elections steer clear of adopting platform on rights

CAIRO (AFP) — Women candidates in Egypt's parliamentary elections have decided that a rights platform is a losing ticket and are instead focusing on the issue of poverty.

The 4,000 candidates running in the vote set for Nov. 29 include only 35 women; seven from the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), seven from opposition ranks, and the rest independents.

"If I run on women's rights, I'm sure to lose," Sawassan Al Kilani, an NDP member running for reelection in Ismailiyya, north of Cairo, told AFP.

"The key problems for women are first of all poverty and unemployment, not whether to ban polygamy or easy divorces," said Ms. Kilani, who has served 20 years in parliament.

"The question of democracy is secondary compared to the problems of hunger,

housing, drinking water and medical care, from which women suffer most," said Fahmya Al Assal, a Marxist candidate in the Cairo slum of Imbaba.

Even an issue such as illiteracy — from which an average 65 per cent of adult women suffer compared to 34 per cent of adult men — is seen as "relatively minor," said Laila Hassan, an independent.

"When people are dying of hunger, just try to run a campaign against illiteracy or to talk of subjects like the right to give citizenship to children of Egyptian women married to foreigners," Ms. Hassan said.

"There are other more pressing issues," said Laila Abdul Wahab, who is standing as an independent in the rural area of Banha, north of Cairo.

"Fifty per cent of children leave school because they don't have the means to buy books and paper. The policy of compulsory education isn't enough if free education is not guaranteed," Ms. Abdul Wahab said.

"The low participation of intellectuals (as candidates), and the failure of the middle-class to register to vote means that most voters are poor," she said.

"We women have the easiest and most direct contact with voters," Ms. Assal said. "In Egypt every home's doors are open to a woman, which is not always the case for a man."

But women candidates must also face the opposition of Islamic radicals who tear down their posters and break up their meetings, shouting slogans such as, "cursed is a community led by a woman," a quote from the Prophet Mohammad.

The number of women in parliament varied from six to eight until 1979 when former President Anwar Al Sadat ordered 32 seats set aside for them. But the quota was later ruled unconstitutional and eliminated.

The last parliament included 10 women, three of them were appointed by the president, who names 10 of the body's 454 seats.

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JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 723111-19	Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 623785.
PROGRAMME TWO	St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
14:00 ... Back to the Future	Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
14:30 ... Hurry and the Hendersons	De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
15:00 ... Blue Heaters	Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
15:45 ... Only in Hollywood	Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
16:10 ... I Love Lucy	Anglican Church Tel. 652026.
16:30 ... Tarzan	Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331.
17:00 ... Children's Programme: Fractals	Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 715261.
17:30 ... Magazine — Omniscience	St. Ephraim Church Tel. 711751.
18:00 ... Drama — C'est Mon Histoire	Armenian International Church Tel. 625236.
19:00 ... Magazine — Le Journal	Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
19:15 ... Magazine — Fast Pas River	German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457.
19:30 ... News Headlines	The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
19:35 ... The Fire Flights	Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
20:00 ... The 2nd and The Beautiful	The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
21:10 ... Star Trek	
22:00 ... News in English	
22:25 ... Film: "Bevery Hills Cow Girl Blues"	
23:50 ... L'Histoire Secret Du Pétrole	
00:30 ... My Good Friend	
PRAYER TIMES	
04:40 ... Sunrise	
06:40 ... Sunrise	
11:30 ... Dhuhr	
14:15 ... Asr	
16:40 ... Maghrib	
18:00 ... Isha	
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church	Min./Max. temp.
Sweith, Tel. 811740	Amman 7/19

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Agaba 15/2h
Deserts 5/21
Jordan Valley 5/27

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 21, Agaba 2h Humidity
readings: Amman 28 per cent.
Agaba 32 per cent.

**USEFUL
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS**

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ramzi Mzawi 894788
Dr. Khalil Abu Marjoub 779797
Dr. Awni Al Hawamdeh 832350
Dr. Khalil Al Tushiq 752523
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 776336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmiesan pharmacy 637641
Najib pharmacy 647632

IRAD:
Dr. Mohammad Al Khalili 273090
Alquds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617100
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 615040
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 767111
Telephone Information 121
Police assistance 121
Overseas Calls 101230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623100
Ahali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 723111
Radio Jordan 754111
Jordan Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 68-53201
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 18-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/332
Khafid Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmiesan 637071
Shmiesan Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdal 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Irfan, Al-Mataraeen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 802240/34
Queen Alia Hospital 666240/9
Amal Hospital 674155
The Araf Centre for Heart and
Special Surgery 865194
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)983323
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)983561
Al Husna Modem Hospital (09)984049

IRAD:
Princess Basma Hospital (03)2755
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)2723
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (03)2471

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)3141

FOR THE TRAVELLER

**QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT**

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ)
Flights

(Terminal 1)
05:40 Aden (RJ)
05:40 Jakarta (RJ)
09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:00 Agaba (RJ)
09:30 New Delhi (RJ)
09:55 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:00 Colombo (RJ)
18:20 Beirut (RJ)
14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)
17:55 London, Berlin (RJ)



Her Majesty Queen Noor, accompanied by HRH Princess Rania Abdullah and Ina'm Mufti, Thursday tours Jordan River Designs autumn exhibition (photo by Crystal)

Queen opens Jordan River Designs' annual autumn exhibition

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Thursday opened Jordan River Designs' (JRD) annual autumn exhibition entitled "Khawater" (Thoughts) at JRD's showroom located in a renovated 1930's stone house in Jabal Amman, a Royal Court statement said.

The "Khawater" exhibition features, for the first time, hand-embroidered bed linens, duvet covers, bath towels, table clothes, office accessories, handbags, mosaic-inspired wall hangings, quilts decorated with Islamic Arabesque designs and shirts sporting contemporary Jordanian motifs symbolizing Petra, Jerash and Ajloun, the statement said.

Queen Noor expressed her pride at JRD's high

quality craftsmanship, evident in their 4,300 briefcases and folders that were distributed at the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit by the Royal Court's International Press Office and the summit's organisers, the statement said.

JRD was established in 1987 by Save the Children Fund in collaboration with the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF). The aim of this project was to provide underprivileged urban women in East Amman with income-generating opportunities that are sensitive to their social and cultural beliefs and are environment-friendly.

Since its inception, 1,584 women have participated and received JD 358,564 in wages, while more than

900 beneficiaries have been trained in production techniques and business management skills. Through partial funding from the National Design and Trade Centre and Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation, JRD has participated in several international trade shows in Berlin, Paris, Frankfurt and Japan.

Save the Children is the process of transferring this project to a Jordanian charitable society that will be presided over by Princess Rania Abdullah.

Queen Noor was received by HRH Princess Rania Abdullah, Project Manager Hana Mitri Shabin, the women beneficiaries, the JRD staff and designers.

Workshop to look at environment education

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Environment Society (JES) and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) will jointly organise a workshop under the title "Environmental Education in Case Studies," a Friedrich-Naumann Foundation statement said.

The function will take place in Ma'in during the period of November 19-23, the statement said.

The workshop, which is held within the National Environmental Information and Education Programme (NEIEP), aims at developing communicators' capacities in the field of environment and training the trainers, according to the statement.

The 30 participants come from the newly elected municipalities, political parties, women organisations, JES newly established branches and the media.

According to the statement, the workshop will provide the participants with a solid knowledge about the national and global state of the environment.

The participants will then be introduced to techniques to enable them to maximise participation and integration in group work.

The participants will be exposed to environmental case studies on which they will work to find proper solutions and later present their results.

The workshop is one of NEIEP's activities which it uses to promote environmental awareness and create nationwide environmental movements, the statement said.

King, Queen attend Mayo Clinic satellite link-up ceremony

AMMAN (J.T.) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Thursday attended a ceremony for the satellite link-up between Mayo Clinic in Rochester, the United States and two hospitals here, the King Hussein Medical Centre and the Amman Surgical Hospital.

In a brief address at the ceremony held at the King Hussein Medical Centre which included a live satellite interaction session and opening speeches by physicians in Amman and the Mayo Clinic, King Hussein thanked the responsible authorities on both sides for the link-up.

"It is a great pleasure for us to converse at this point in time. This is a very important link in our common endeavours to serve our people and serve humanity," the King said.

"I am very proud to be here with you today and very happy to have reached this point, a beginning of what is to come in our cooperation," he added.

"I am very happy with this new start and this new development which is great in size and its objectives and wish you continued success, which is a success for all of us, and we are proud to be partners in



Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Thursday attend the inauguration of the satellite link-up between Mayo Clinic and two hospitals here. The ceremony was held at the King Hussein Medical Centre (AFP photo)

achieving successes in the future," King Hussein said.

The \$2.8 million project will create a two-way audio-visual link between the Mayo Clinic and Amman's two hospitals.

Through this link-up, doctors and physicians will be able to conduct medical consultation sessions spontaneously across continents.

Each of the two hospitals in Jordan have been equipped with tele-medical rooms from which consultations and information exchange via satellite will be possible.

Doctors on both sides stressed the importance of this link-up not only for consultations purposes but also for educational purposes. Starting in January and

in two-month intervals educational conferences between Mayo and Jordanian doctors will begin.

The joint venture will also provide Jordanian doctors with special status at Mayo Clinic in the United States as well as doctors and medical students with a chance to receive new medical information first hand.

Police arrest 2 suspects in shop murder

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police Thursday apprehended two suspects in connection with the stabbing of a 20-year-old man last Saturday in his grocery shop in Jabal Amman, official sources said.

"A witness who was also robbed at knife point was able to give police a good description of the assailants, and later when they (the suspects) were arrested, he was able to identify them in a police line-up," Khaled Darwish, the prosecutor general investigating the crime, said.

Rabi' Tawfiq Odeh, owner of Al Tawfiq Grocery Shop in Youssef Izzeddin Street near the Third Circle, was stabbed three times to the back and chest. The assailant/s robbed the victim of less than JD 20.

Mr. Darwish told the Jordan Times Thursday that two men aged 22 and 24, both with previous records, confessed to and re-enacted the crime.

The motive behind the murder was theft, Mr. Darwish added.

"Both men were planning to rob the store that night and were monitoring

the area. One of them approached the store pretending to buy a drink but really intending to check if there was any money in the cash drawer," Mr. Darwish said.

When the suspect saw cash in the drawer he waved to his friend, then asked Mr. Odeh for an item on the top shelf behind the sales counter. When Mr. Odeh turned his back, the suspect stabbed him once in the back, said the prosecutor general.

"Mr. Odeh ran inside in the storage room instead of running outside, and the 24-year-old assailant followed him inside and stabbed him again twice in the chest," he added.

During that time, he added, a customer (the witness) entered the shop and asked for Mr. Rabi'. The witness said he was threatened by the assailant who demanded that he give him his money (JD 50).

The assailants then fled the scene.

Mr. Rabi', the son of the owner of the grocery, died shortly after the stabbing.

Meanwhile, a 30-year-old man, identified as Sami K., who was arrested last Tuesday in connection with the

shooting death of his brother-in-law is said to have killed Ashraf Rawhi S., 27, because he refused to attend the suspect's wedding, family sources said Thursday.

Mr. Rawhi was married to Sami's sister.

He was shot once in the back of the head by his brother-in-law, the sources said.

"He (Sami) was to be wed Tuesday night and he wanted Ashraf to attend his wedding, but they had family problems, and the victim refused. After a heated argument Sami drew a gun and shot Ashraf while he had his back turned," sources told the Jordan Times. The shooting occurred in Sami's photo studio, called Paris, in Sweifieh.

The victim, a father of a one-year-old daughter, was laid to rest Thursday, the family said. The suspect was apprehended by the authorities shortly after committing the crime. The following day he confessed and re-enacted the crime, official sources said.

Woman sentenced to 1 year for murder of attacker

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Criminal Court Thursday sentenced a 32-year-old woman to one year in prison for the murder of a man who, after sexually harassing her, assaulted her in March.

Fatmeh Salem, a Zarqa resident, who pleaded not guilty, benefited from a penalty reduction because the court decided that the woman was acting in self defence and protecting her honour, presiding Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq told the court room.

According to court documents, Ms. Salem, a housewife and the mother of three children, killed Adel

Mohammad, a Sudanese national, on March 8, in her house in Wadi Hajar area in Zarqa after he repeatedly expressed sexual intentions towards her.

The documents said that the victim lived close to the woman's house and that he repeatedly made sexual advances to her, "since her husband was a truck driver and was away from home very often."

On the night of the murder, the court said, the victim went to Ms. Salem's house at a late hour and knocked on the door.

One of her children opened the door and Mohammad forced his way into the house, the court document added.

Mohammad then proceeded to assault Ms. Salem, beating her and hitting her head against the wall, according to the court document.

The woman managed to escape to the kitchen where she grabbed a knife and demanded that the victim to leave the house. "But he refused and ran towards her, and she stabbed him in the chest," the court document said.

The court said that the woman then asked one of her children to call for an ambulance, but then she decided to take the victim to the hospital by taxi.

Mohammad died shortly after arriving to hospital. The woman then turned

herself in, the document added.

On Nov. 5, in a similar case, a 25-year-old Kafarangeh woman was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison for the murder of a man who sexually harassed her.

Hanan Adnan, first received 15 years with hard labour, but the sentence was reduced to seven and a half years, benefiting from a penalty reduction because she had been sexually harassed.

The court's decision was based on the fact that on the night of the murder the victim, Mousa Hussein, did not physically attack Ms. Adnan, but only threatened her verbally.

King receives credentials of eight envoys

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday received the credentials of eight newly-appointed ambassadors to Jordan. At a special ceremony held at Raghdan palace, the King received the credentials of Chad's ambassador to Jordan Abdul Rasoul Mohammad, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Ambassador Omar Khatib, the Bahraini Ambassador Mohammad Seif Jabr Al Musallam, the Swedish Ambassador Ajneeta Bohman, Al Mukhtar Walid Hai of Mauritania, Roltan Persitini of Hungary, Abdullah Sdeiri of Saudi Arabia and Ahmad Naser Ali Naser of the United Arab Emirates. The ceremony was attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Qasem, Prince Talal Ibn Mohammad, the King's military secretary, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and the King's advisor Hmeidi Fayed.

Minister discusses economic cooperation with ambassadors

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf and the South Korean Ambassador to Jordan, Jung-II Oh, met to discuss the ministry's request for a South Korean \$10 million loan to Jordan to finance water projects and a Jordanian-South Korean technical and cultural agreement which is set to be signed before the end of 1995.

Petra reported that the minister also met with the Belgian Ambassador Guido Courtois to discuss prospects for Belgium's financing of a number of Jordanian projects.

The minister also looked into the possibilities of exchanges of visits by business people from the two countries to be organised through the chambers of industry and trade.

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURE

* "Arab Orthodoxism and its current affairs" (in Arabic) by Dr. Raouf Abu Jaber at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman, at 6.00p.m.

DANCE

* Performance by a Pakistani cultural troupe at the Royal Cultural Centre on Friday at 7.00 p.m.

FILMS

* Films for children and the elderly at Goethe Institut at 6.00p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

* Recital of poems by Dr. Walid Seif at the Phoenix Gallery at 6.30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Pakistani Women of Substance in paintings and photographs" at the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jebel Weibdeh. Also, single country exhibition of Pakistani products at Al Bassam Hall, King Abdullah Gardens.

* U.N. photo exhibition on the occasion of the U.N.'s 50th anniversary, "The U.N. through the eyes of its staff," at Abdul Hameed Shoman Gallery, Jabal Amman through Nov.23.

* Exhibition of stamps about the Royal Hashemite family (1916-1995) at the Royal Cultural Centre.

King orders removal of statue

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein has decided to have removed a statue of himself which was erected in the front garden of the Prime Ministry last week because it contravenes Islamic Sharia, a source at the Royal Court told the Jordan Times Friday.

The 7.5 metre-high statue, built by North Korean artists who were commissioned by the Amman Municipality, was brought down from its pedestal at dawn Thursday.

"We have asked Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi for his opinion and he said the statue contradicted Islam, so His Majesty ordered its removal," the source said.

Reuters Thursday quoted an Amman municipality official as saying that King Hussein ordered the statue to be carted away "because (the King) was unhappy with it."

The two-tonne copper statue was the Amman Municipality's idea to be presented to the King, marking his 60th birthday. It took six months to complete, at a cost of JD 30,000, a source said.

The statue was to have been unveiled in an official ceremony on Thursday.



PAKISTAN CULTURAL TROUPE

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OF

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IN COOPERATION WITH THE JORDANIAN MINISTRY OF CULTURE, HAS ORGANIZED A DANCE PERFORMANCE

BY

A PAKISTANI CULTURAL TROUPE

AT

THE ROYAL CULTURAL CENTRE

AT

7 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 17, 18 AND 20 HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS SARVATH EL-HASSAN HAS KINDLY CONSENTED TO PATRONIZE THE PERFORMANCE.

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1. ROYAL CULTURAL CENTRE.
2. JORDAN INTERNATIONAL FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM - PAKISTAN AIRLINES - KING HUSSEIN STREET.
3. EMBASSY OF PAKISTAN - JABAL ALWABDEH.

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Britain frees N.Ireland prisoners

BELFAST (R) — Britain freed over 80 Catholic and Protestant prisoners Friday under new rules to reward 15-month guerrilla cease-fires and keep alive hopes that a fragile peace will turn into an elusive political settlement.

The gates of the top-security Maze Prison outside Belfast were opened on the stroke of 8.30 a.m. (GMT) to allow inmates jailed for security offences to go home under new rules relaxing the qualification for remission.

A total of 84 prisoners will get early release, equally divided between Catholic Republicans, who fought to end British rule, and Protestant loyalists, who battled to maintain it.

The first few to leave the Maze and two other top-security jails in Northern Ireland were met at the gates by relatives — Republicans on one side and loyalists on the other.

Sinn Féin, political wing of IRA guerrillas, dismissed the move as cosmetic and repeated its call for full release of all of what it calls political prisoners.

Jim O'Carroll, who was serving a six-year term, said: "This is too little, too late. There are lifers in there and it's doing them no good. All prisoners should be freed immediately."

Close to 1,000 men and women are held in British jails for security offences ranging from arms possession to murder in connection with the 25-year Northern Ireland conflict. Easier remission terms will eventually trim the prison population to about half that, prison sources said, leaving mainly long-term prisoners and 200 serving life terms.

Britain refuses to amnesty the prison population or to recognise the offences for which they were jailed as political but eased remis-

sion terms in a gesture to reward ceasefires to a war which killed 3,200.

The Irish government, which partners Britain in efforts to reconcile Northern Ireland's Protestants and Irish Catholic nationalists, has freed 36 IRA prisoners in recent months, years ahead of schedule.

The Irish Republican Army and Protestant gunmen have observed truces for 15 months, but the peace process they helped launch is deadlocked.

Britain insists that the gunmen start handing over their weapons to gain admission for their political spokesmen to new all-party talks on a lasting settlement. But Sinn Féin has ruled out any IRA disarmament as a surrender and says the issue can only be discussed as the all-party talks as part of the settlement.

British Prime Minister John Major accused Sinn

Fein this week of being the main stumbling block to peace and urged it to soften its opposition to disarmament and get the IRA to end its so-called punishment beatings in Catholic communities.

These have continued unchecked throughout the ceasefire and are again on the front pages of the island's newspapers after the abduction of a 19-year-old by an IRA gang Thursday.

John Hegarty, who was taken from his home in Strabane by five armed and masked men who said they were from the IRA, was found by police early Friday and taken for medical treatment.

Baseball bats and iron bars are the usual instruments used to mete out punishment by IRA squads. Mr. Hegarty's medical state was not immediately known.

Polls show Russian Communists on top ahead of vote, with 23 %

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia's Communist Party came out on top of a poll published Friday of voters' intentions for the Dec. 17 legislative poll, with support now at 23 per cent after growing steadily in the last two months.

The latest poll by the Vision Institute, published by the Izvestia daily, showed that backing for Gennady Ziuganov's Communist Party had risen since the last poll published in September that gave it 18 per cent support.

The moderate pro-reform Yabloko Party of Grigori Yavlinski and the government coalition party of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Our House-Russia, tied for second place, both with 10 per cent voter support.

The centrist Women of Russia Party and the nationalist, center-left Congress of

Russian Communities of Alexander Lebed were both credited with eight per cent support in the upcoming vote.

Forty-two parties have met registration requirements, though fewer than 10 of these are thought to be able to break the minimum five per cent support barrier required for representation in the State Duma.

The legality of the five per cent requirement has been challenged by the Supreme Court and about 100 Duma deputies who have sought a ruling from the Constitutional Court, expected any day now.

Support for the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy — which made a strong showing in the last legislative elections in December 1993 with 23 per cent — meanwhile had dropped to a crit-

ical level.

The poll Friday showed it now had only five per cent of voter support, down from six per cent in September. The opinion poll also showed that 90 per cent of voters backing Mr. Zhirinovskiy's party had no higher education.

The Communist Party drew 56 per cent of its support from retired people, only three per cent backlog from the under-25 crowd, while seven per cent of its supporters had a higher education.

Much of the support for Yabloko — 57 per cent — came from voters under 40 and 18 per cent had a higher education.

The daily did not say how many people were questioned in the poll. The Vision surveys are usually based on samples of more than 1,000 people in different Russian cities.

Yeltsin likely to stay in hospital until the end of November

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin is increasing his work rate as he recovers from a mild heart attack in October, but he will probably remain in hospital until the end of this month, his chief spokesman said Friday.

Presidential press secretary Sergei Medvedev told ITAR-TASS news agency that doctors had recommended that Mr. Yeltsin "undergoes a full course of recovery" following his attack on Oct. 26, his second bout of heart trouble in four months.

TASS quoted Mr. Medvedev as saying he understood from the doctors that this meant he would stay in Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital until the end of November.

Mr. Medvedev dismissed rumours of a deterioration in the 64-year-old leader's health which he said were deliberately started abroad by financial dealers out to make quick profits in volatile market.

"There are no grounds for such rumours," Mr. Medvedev said. He added that Mr. Yeltsin

was using his free time "to actively read newspapers and is ordering all regular publications published in Moscow".

Mr. Yeltsin was scheduled to meet three top officials in hospital Friday including First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais.

Mr. Medvedev said Mr. Chubais would press Mr. Yeltsin to report on moves to improve payments of wages, pensions, student grants and in the defence sector and would also discuss the pace of privatisation.

Ex-bodyguard joins Roh in Seoul jail

SEOUL (R) — South Korean prosecutors Friday arrested the former chief bodyguard of ex-President Roh Tae-woo as Mr. Roh spent his first day in jail on charges of pocketing bribes from business tycoons.

A prosecution official said Lee Hyun-woo would be held behind bars in the same detention centre as Mr. Roh on several charges, including bribery.

Mr. Lee was arrested after being grilled by state prosecutors for more than 50 hours over his role in managing some of Mr. Roh's \$654 million slush funds.

Mr. Roh, the first South Korean head of state, retired or serving to be arrested, was visited Friday by his only son Jae-Hun, who told reporters at the prison gates he was bringing clothes and books for his father.

Mr. Lee is suspected of having taken 2.65 billion won (\$3.44 million) from business tycoons in return for giving them favours in lucrative projects.

Prosecutors were expected to soon summon heads of major business groups for a second round of questioning following

the arrest of Mr. Roh.

The 1,000-page arrest warrant said Mr. Roh took more than \$300 million in bribes from 30 business conglomerates during his 1988-93 term in office in return for lucrative contracts.

"Several heads of business groups cannot escape resumption," the official said without elaborating. Mr. Roh tearfully confessed last month to amassing his slush funds and said he still kept \$242 million.

News reports quoted prison officials as saying that Mr. Roh — now known as Prisoner "100" — was relaxing in his cell. "He went right to bed yesterday. He must have been tired," state radio quoting a prison official as saying.

Guards are keeping a round-the-clock vigil outside the cell of the retired four-star general, who is expected to spend his 63rd birthday next month behind bars.

Among the business leaders named in the arrest warrant as having given money to Mr. Roh were Kim Woo-Choon, chairman of the mighty Daewoo Group, the country's fourth largest con-

glomerate. Mr. Kim is accused of giving Mr. Roh 10 billion won (\$13 million) in return for a contract to build a submarine base.

Mr. Kim, who is in Poland on a business trip, was accused of delivering the money to Mr. Roh in his office in the presidential Blue House in May 1991, on two separate occasions.

Also named was the chief executive of the Dong Ab Group, a major construction concern.

The prosecution official also said they would continue to investigate whether politicians had dipped into Mr. Roh's \$654 million slush fund.

Mr. Roh was interrogated by prosecutors for the second time Wednesday, one day after he threatened to spill the beans on his financing of the presidential campaign.

Veteran opposition Kim Dae-Jung has admitted he accepted \$2.6 million from Mr. Roh and has declared "do or die" war against his archrival, President Kim Young-Sam, who he alleges took hundreds of millions of dollars.

President Kim has said he did not receive "a single cent."

Diana interviewer had beginner's luck

LONDON (R) — The British journalist who succeeded where Oprah Winfrey and David Frost failed, by winning an exclusive interview with Princess Diana, said he requested it and she accepted.

Martin Bashir, the BBC journalist who pulled off one of the biggest journalistic coups of the decade, initially didn't realise the importance of what he had achieved.

"I had never ever done a royal story before and therefore I suppose I wasn't, in truth, aware of the momentous nature of achieving something like this," he told a news conference.

"When she agreed to the interview there was a certain feeling of professional satisfaction but at the time it was a normal programme for me."

The unassuming 32-year-old reporter emerged from hiding Thursday to quell some of the frenzy in the British media about his hour-long taped chat with the estranged wife of Prince Charles on the BBC news programme "Panorama".

The surprise interview, which infuriated officials at Buckingham Palace who had not been consulted, is set to earn a fortune for the BBC and propel Mr. Bashir out of obscurity.

ABC reportedly bought the American rights to the programme for \$1 million and the BBC is still negotiating with other countries.

Mr. Bashir said princess Diana, 34, was approached personally about the interview which is expected to attract 20 million viewers when it is screened on Monday night.

"I was able to outline general areas for discussion but no questions were given beforehand," he said, giving nothing away about what Princess Diana said.

"It was just the normal way we operate, there was no preferential treatment."

Princess Diana's latest publicity coup and the secrecy surrounding it caught the princess's closest officials off guard. Her private secretary Patrick Jephson was reported to be considering resigning over the issue.

"She has virtually made his position untenable because she's broken the convention that private secretaries are always kept informed of matters of such importance," a palace insider told a British newspaper.

Mr. Bashir refused to divulge the contents of the interview, a tightly guarded secret, but Princess Diana is expected to talk openly about her family, future and the acrimonious split with Prince Charles.



Riot police get ready outside the Korydallos prison in Athens which they stormed after a riot of some 1,500 inmates for two days (AFP photo)

Prisoner hanged then burned by inmates in Athens prison riot

ATHENS (R) — A prisoner, probably a foreigner, was hanged and then burned by rioting inmates at Athens maximum security prison, police said Friday.

It was the fourth confirmed death of an inmate since more than 1,000 prisoners seized Korydallos Prison Tuesday. Riot police surrounding the prison recovered the body Friday.

The first three dead to be removed from the prison were all Greeks who died from drug overdoses. Inmates seized the prison hospital at the start of their rampage and gave out drugs held at the facility.

Police said they could see the slumped figures of 10 to 15 more prisoners around the compound but did not know whether they were dead or in a drug-induced stupor.

Police fired live rounds into the air and scores of rounds of teargas on Thursday night to stop hundreds of prisoners who tried to escape by rushing police lines on mass.

Police then seized the main administrative office but the rest of the prison compound in western Athens is controlled by inmates, who have burned and wrecked everything in

sight. They have a list of demands ranging from better food to less crowding.

Athens radios said there were a rising number of calls for Justice Minister Ioannis Pottakis to resign over the handling of the prison uprising.

The Justice Ministry gave assurances that the inmates would turn over control of the prison Friday morning but there was no sign that the riot was over.

"Order" has been restored, Justice Ministry General Secretary George Pavlas told reporters late Thursday. "By tomorrow morning they should start returning to their cells."

It was the second time during the three-day revolt that government officials said the riot had ended. But the prisoners have refused to return to their cells and give up makeshift weapons to prison authorities.

At least 20 prisoners have been injured since inmates seized the prison. The rioters released six staff hostages Thursday but hundreds of prisoners tried to break out through the front gate and two other exits.

Riot police lobbing teargas and firing rifles in the air thwarted the mass break-

out, rushing through the main gate as staff fled the administrative building.

The prison consists of a cluster of several buildings, separated by courtyards and surrounded by a tall wall. The administrative building is adjacent to the main gate, one of several exits.

"We suddenly saw hundreds of inmates breaking a glass door and racing towards us, towards the front gate," prison social worker Sofia Flori told reporters. "We all rushed outside. They would have killed us."

Police and prisoners clashed inside the front gate and police said they believed some inmates could be injured. Justice Ministry officials said they had no reports of injuries.

Police said they were now controlling the administrative offices and heavily guarding all other entrances but would not move further inside the compound unless provoked.

Korydallos Prison, designed to hold 400 inmates but now housing more than 1,500, has often been criticised for lax security. Since 1990 more than 150 prisoners have escaped in five jailbreaks.

Japan's Princess Sayako visits Bolivia

SANTA CRUZ, Bolivia (AFP) — Japan's Princess Sayako arrived here Thursday for a one-day visit that is part of a tour of the Americas. Princess Sayako, the only daughter of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, arrived Thursday from Brazil. Santa Cruz Mayor Alfredo Romero declared her an illustrious visitor. She also held a private lunch at her hotel, met with representatives of the Japanese community here and visited the Japanese hospital and zoo, which receives contributions from Japan.

Suspected bomb package reveals cat

MANILA (AFP) — Suspense turned to relief and embarrassment for police bomb experts after a package they thought contained a bomb was blown open, only to reveal a cat, the official Philippine News Agency said Friday. The report said unidentified men in a jeep left the package, marked "do not open, exclusively" at the door of a shipping firm here. A man telephoned police to say there was a bomb inside the package. Police rushed to examine it with a stethoscope, with a curious crowd in tow. Bomb disposal experts said they heard something moving or ticking inside the package and resorted to using an "electronic-hydraulic disruptor." But after it was blown open, what emerged was a cat which sprinted away from the scene, the news agency said.

Family of Nobel winner faked kidnapping

GUATEMALA CITY (R) — Guatemalan police arrested relatives of Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu Thursday and charged them with faking the kidnapping of her 22-month old nephew. Police said Ms. Menchu's sister and brother-in-law faked the kidnapping of their son Carlos Velasquez Menchu in an attempt to extort money from Ms. Menchu. "We needed money but we knew Rigoberta would never give us any so we decided to say the child was kidnapped and ask for ransom money," Ms. Menchu's sister Cristina Menchu told reporters after her arrest. The child was reportedly kidnapped this month by two unidentified gunmen outside Ms. Menchu's Guatemala City home.

The Boss goes solo across U.S.

LOS ANGELES (R) — American rock star Bruce "the Boss" Springsteen will begin the first solo acoustic tour of his 23-year career in Los Angeles on Nov. 26, his publicist said. The singer, who achieved his greatest commercial success in the mid-1980s with stadium-friendly anthems such as Born in the USA and Dancing in the Dark, will play to small theatres in seven cities on the first leg of his tour.

Here today gone tomorrow

LONDON (R) — British newspapers lamented the passing of one of their own with the closing of Today, a daily tabloid. The staff of 200 were taken by surprise when Rupert Murdoch's News International announced that the edition they were preparing would be the last. "Today finds there is no tomorrow," said the Independent, while the Times intoned with "newspaper goes down with all guns blazing." "Goodbye. It's been great to know you," Today said in its final front-page headline.

Student accused of killing 2 in U.S. school shooting

LYNNVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — A high school senior took his rifle to school to shoot teachers, an investigator said. He killed one, injured another and also killed a student who got in the way.

As screaming students fled in terror, 17-year-old Jamie Rouse was wrestled to the ground by another student and a teacher and held until police arrived at Richland High School in this rural community of about 400 people.

Michael Chapman, chief investigator for the Giles County Sheriff's Department, refused to say why Rouse was angry at teachers, but noted that his grades began deteriorating

about two years ago. "His purpose of going in was to shoot teachers. That's what he did and that's what he intended to do," Chapman said. "The little girl just got in the way."

Rouse was charged with murder and attempted murder in the shooting that began with the school day.

Police said Rouse entered the school's west wing and opened fire as he walked down a hall. After he was subdued, Thomas Jenkins, 18, and nine teachers held him until police came.

"Jamie was holding onto the gun for dear life," Jenkins said. "He wasn't trying to get away. He was just trying to hold the gun."

He didn't say one word." Killed were Carolyn Foster, 58, a business teacher, and Diane Collins, 16, Carol Yancey, 49, a science and math teacher, was shot in the head and hospitalized in stable condition.

Earlier, Rouse's cousin, 16-year-old Beth Rogers, said he was angry with a girl over a minor traffic accident he had gotten into with the girl's boyfriend. Neither was among those shot.

Rouse and the girl "got into a fight yesterday and he told her he was going to kill her," Rogers said. "My cousin, he'll do it. That's just the way he is."

n's Princess
yako visits
Bolivia

CRUZ, Bolivia
— Japan's Princess
arrived here
for a one-day
visit. It is part of a tour of
Latin America.
Princess Aiko
is the only daughter
of Emperor Akihito and
Empress Michiko. She
arrived in Cruz
Mayor Alvaro
declared her a
special visitor. She
will have lunch at the
city hall with repre-
sents of the Japanese
community and will
visit the hospital and
receives contribu-
tions from Japan.

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cat

A (AFP) —
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Boss goes
across U.S.

NGELES (R) —
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Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat and French actress Catherine Deneuve applaud a speaker during United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) 50th anniversary ceremonies (AFP photo)

World leaders thank UNESCO for first 50 years

PARIS (R) — World leaders thanked UNESCO for its promotion of democracy and peace during its first 50 years and artists and educators praised its initiatives to encourage global exchanges and foster cultural heritage.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat complimented its efforts to preserve the religious heritage of Jerusalem, which he hoped one day would serve as capital of an independent Palestinian state.

Egyptian President Hosni

Mubarak thanked it for helping to save the Ramses II Temple at Abu Simbel from the Aswan Dam irrigation project that threatened to submerge it.

President Nelson Mandela, in a message read in his name, hailed the agency for helping South Africa return to democracy last year, and to UNESCO membership after a 38-year absence.

U.S. President Bill Clinton also sent a message, saying he hoped Washington could soon return to the

agency that it left in 1984 in protest at alleged mismanagement and anti-Western bias.

Mr. Clinton said rejoining UNESCO was a priority for his administration if the necessary dues could be coaxed out of an isolationist U.S. Congress.

UNESCO was so pleased by his message that it leaked it ahead of its delivery. "This gives me great pleasure," UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor told reporters Wednesday in

a reference to Mr. Clinton's words.

UNESCO's finances and its spirit were devastated when the United States and then Britain pulled out of the agency in the mid-1980s. Between them, they took away some 30 per cent of the agency's budget.

Mr. Mayor, a Spaniard elected UNESCO chief in 1987, has since cut its bloated bureaucracy and improved management, convincing Washington — if not yet London,

SPD chief sets new course for German politics

MANNHEIM, Germany (R) — Swept along by an astonishing change of mood, Germany's opposition Social Democrats have out of the blue elected a new leader and sparked speculation that they could change the face of German politics.

Saxony state premier and new SPD Chairman Oskar Lafontaine is a bold and canny leftist who has already made clear he is prepared to challenge received thinking — including the taboo of working with East German reform Communists.

Mr. Lafontaine seized the leadership with an astonishing coup, announcing his candidacy at the party conference Thursday just an hour before Rudolf Scharping was due to be re-elected unopposed by delegates.

The portly 52-year-old had revived the shattered confidence of the divided party with a battling policy address, and rode a tidal wave of sympathy to defeat the unlucky and uncharis-

matic Scharping by a convincing 321 votes to 190.

"There are still policies which can inspire us, and if we are inspired we can inspire others," he had told members in his speech which tried to put the disoriented SPD back in touch with the heyday of Chancellors Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt.

Mr. Scharping contributed to hopes that the quarrelsome party, which has slumped to under 28 per cent in opinion polls, could again become an effective force by pledging to support Mr. Lafontaine and agreeing to take a deputy leader's post.

Mr. Lafontaine, who lost to Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the 1990 general election, leads the party's pacifist wing and embodies a left-wing SPD tradition that yearns for a change to an ecologically-minded welfare state.

Mr. Scharping had tried with little success to shift the SPD towards the middle ground that Mr. Kohl has

dominated so successfully since 1982.

The leftist-environmentalist Greens were quick to see in Mr. Lafontaine a chance that the combination of SPD and Greens which has already taken power in several regional states could dislodge Mr. Kohl in Bonn after the 1998 election.

In some East German states, such as Berlin, there is already a theoretical majority for the combined parties of the left — but this would mean the SPD joining forces with the political pariahs of the ex-communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS).

Intriguingly, Mr. Lafontaine agreed to meet PDS leader Gregor Gysi on Nov. 29, sparking speculation that he might consider cooperating with the party which has become the voice of many disgruntled East Germans who feel misunderstood by the West.

Mr. Gysi put it succinctly: "How much longer are the voters of the SPD, the Greens and the PDS going

to accept that we have these majorities (of the left) and do nothing with them?"

Mr. Lafontaine declined to rule anything out.

Instead he gave a hint of a more colourful and combative opposition style, fighting off criticism from Mr. Kohl's conservatives that he was flirting with the successors of the party responsible for decades of tyranny in East Germany.

"I find that more than hypocritical coming from a party which has itself absorbed small East German parties who helped to put up barbed wire and build the Berlin Wall," he said.

"And now Kohl is shaking hands with Chinese generals," he added, referring to Mr. Kohl's visit to a Chinese army division earlier this week, the first by a Western head of government.

"If (post-war conservative Chancellor) Konrad Adenauer could see this, he'd be turning in his grave," Mr. Lafontaine said.

Democrats try to stick Gingrich with 'crybaby' label

WASHINGTON (R) — Democrats blasted House Speaker Newt Gingrich Thursday for letting his pique over his treatment on an Air Force One flight interfere with ending a government shutdown and tried to exploit media charges that the speaker was a "crybaby."

The budget debate degenerated into name-calling and vitriol as Democrats gleefully exploited an admission by Mr. Gingrich that he and Senate majority leader Bob Dole might have taken a tougher stand in the

standoff in anger over the trip to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's funeral.

The House of Representatives voted 231-173 to bar Democrats from bringing to the chamber the cover of the tabloid New York Daily News, which screamed "crybaby" and had a cartoon of Mr. Gingrich as a wailing baby. The Republicans said it was against House rules to call the speaker a "crybaby" and accused Democrats of trying to distract attention from Mr. Clinton's inability to balance the bud-

get.

White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta said he was shocked by the Republican leaders' behaviour. "I think all of this is outrageous — that they would use that kind of pettiness to shut down the federal government and penalise people in this country because they somehow feel that perhaps their egos weren't stroked," he told NBC News.

To counter Mr. Gingrich's argument that Mr. Clinton snubbed him, the White House released photographs

showing Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gingrich, among others, seated around a conference table on Air Force One during the flight to Israel.

Mr. Gingrich has said Mr. Clinton greeted him during the flight but was upset they missed a chance to talk about the budget.

Mr. Gingrich said Wednesday the fact that nobody talked to him or Sen. Dole during the trip to and from Jerusalem 10 days ago is "part of why you ended up with us sending a tougher" interim spending bill to the president.

Sri Lanka ponders move as troops mass for Jaffna

COLOMBO (R) — The Sri Lankan government pondered its next move Friday towards ending the country's long-running ethnic war while the army was poised to enter the northern rebel city of Jaffna.

Diplomats, noting that the eventual fall of the Tamil Tiger stronghold would be a major military success, said the government must refocus on a political solution to bring peace to this tropical South Asian nation.

"For the government, the question is how it proposes to use its spectacular success to move on towards a political solution to end the war," one Western ambassador told Reuters.

Government sources said President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga had held talks with her defence advisers Thursday about the political and security implications of an army victory in Jaffna.

On Friday, the army said there had been no developments since reporting that its forces were one kilometre from the city limits of Jaffna Thursday.

"No major incidents have been reported from the operational area," a one-line army statement said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), however, said they were biding back the army's advance with a spirited defence. A statement faxed to Reuters late Thursday did not comment on the army's claim it was one kilometre from Jaffna's limits.

The LTTE has been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland in the north

and east for minority Tamils. More than 50,000 people have died in the conflict.

Some Western diplomats have argued that the government stands to lose, not gain, if troops occupy the rebel Jaffna bastion, saying the victory would be more symbolic than real.

Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike told Reuters in an interview before the start of the army campaign on Oct. 17 that the government's objective was to "soften the LTTE" to bring them to the negotiating table to hold peace talks.

But diplomats questioned whether this was working. "If the objective was to soften the LTTE, it does not seem to be working," one diplomat said. "Going by the recent bomb blasts in Colombo, and the massive recruitment drive for new and younger cadres, the rebels seem to have only hardened their position if anything."

The question of what will happen after Jaffna falls appears to have set off security alerts in Colombo, where the government stepped up patrols around government buildings Thursday.

Official sources said extra roadblocks were set up at strategic points in the city, including the official temple residence of Mrs. Kumaratunga.

"There is a quantum leap in the threat perception," one official source said. "Fear of suicide attacks on soft targets stems from developments in Jaffna."

Two suspected Tamil

Tiger suicide bombers tried to attack the army headquarters in Colombo last weekend, killing 15 civilians in the neighbourhood.

The government was also grappling with a humanitarian problem Friday. Officials estimate at least 100,000 refugees had arrived at poorly equipped camps in relatively safer areas of the predominantly Tamil north.

Some aid workers say the number of displaced people could be higher than 400,000. The government says it has rushed relief supplies to the refugee camps, but the guerrillas and the army have accused each other of cornering materials.

Military spokesman Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe told a news conference Thursday that government troops were knocking at the city limits of Jaffna Thursday.

Premier blasts MPs

Meanwhile Mrs. Bandaranaike has blasted fellow MPs for bickering and fighting in parliament, warning that it could lead to an insurrection, newspapers said Friday.

Mrs. Bandaranaike, 79, said in a statement Thursday that MPs were using "indecent language, hurling abuses at each other and fighting among themselves rather than setting better standards."

Mrs. Bandaranaike said she often skipped parliament because she was ashamed to hear "indecent language" in the house.

Chechenya presidential elections set for Dec. 17

GROZNY, Russia (Agencies) — Chechenya's presidential elections will take place on Dec. 17, and separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev will not be allowed to stand, the pro-Moscow government here announced Friday.

The decision was taken Friday during a government meeting, a spokesman said.

On Thursday, Chechen separatists vowed to torpedo plans to stage elections in the war-torn republic, saying none should be held until Russian troops have withdrawn, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Moscow has said it wants to hold elections in the Caucasus republic at the same time as a legislative poll in the rest of Russia on Dec. 17. The date has already been set aside for election of a prime minister in Chechenya.

Mr. Dudayev's govern-

ment refused to organise elections in Chechenya in December 1993 at the same time as the rest of Russia.

A year later Russian troops marched into Grozny to quell the three-year-old independence drive. An estimated 30,000 people, mainly civilians, have died in the conflict since then.

Chechen separatists signed a military accord with Russian officials in late June but sporadic fighting is continuing and the talks aimed at shoring up the peace process have largely stalled.

Meanwhile Chechen police killed three people and wounded several others Thursday as they fought off an attack on a checkpoint near the capital of the rebel region, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

The clash was the latest in a string of incidents that have marred efforts to

resume peace talks and preparations for elections next month. Chechen police are loyal to the region's Moscow-installed authorities.

TASS, quoting military sources in the region, said unidentified gunmen attacked the checkpoint at Mesker-Yurt, about 20 kilometres east of the capital Grozny.

Three of the attackers were killed and several wounded, it said. "There is no information yet on police casualties, although there are some."

In a separate report, TASS said Russian troops had defused a powerful remote-controlled bomb near a railway track in the centre of Grozny. The device was similar to that which almost killed Russian military Commander Anatoly Romanov last month.

It also quoted Gen.

Romanov's successor, Anatoly Shkrikov, as denying rebel accusations of Russian attacks on villages. "Now they need a provocation, they need blood, a hubbalo over non-existent events in order to hide their crimes," he said.

Chechens say Russians have launched two air raids against villages in recent weeks.

Nikolai Semyonov, head of the Moscow-run administration, told a news conference Thursday that there should be round-table talks with rival factions and elections should be held as soon as possible.

President Boris Yeltsin's envoy to Chechenya, Oleg Lobov, said Wednesday the region was preparing for a Dec. 17 election to Russia's State Duma lower house of parliament. Regional administration polls may be held the same day.

White House travelgate trial ends with acquittal

WASHINGTON (R) — A jury found the former head of the White House travel office not guilty Thursday of charges he embezzled funds paid by the news media to accompany the president in a case that raised questions about the ethics of the Clinton White House.

It took the 12-member jury less than two hours to find Billy Dale, 58, innocent on two counts accusing

him of taking more than \$68,000 of the travel money and using it for personal expenses. Had he been convicted in the two-week trial he faced up to 20 years in prison.

Mr. Dale broke down in tears as the jury foreman read the verdict. His lawyer, Steven Tabackman, made it clear the defence believed Mr. Dale was a scapegoat for an inept attempt by Clinton insiders to take con-

trol of the potentially lucrative White House travel business.

"The case began as an effort to justify a misguided effort by the White House to remove long-term and highly respected employees and replace them with campaign contributors," Mr. Tabackman told reporters.

At the White House, spokesman Mike McCurry issued a subdued statement on the verdict. "We obvi-

ously respect the decision of the jury. We've indicated here that there are many things about this case that were not handled well by the White House. We wish Mr. Dale and his family well," he said.

Mr. Dale admitted he took checks and cash totalling some \$68,000 but testified that he used the money to cover expenses such as tips to porters and other costs incurred during road trips.

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Human life above political sovereignty

THE OUTRAGE with which the international community has reacted to Nigeria's execution of nine human rights activists reflects a growing trend towards responding against human rights violations with more vigour, more determination and more effectiveness.

This trend should be encouraged, strengthened and translated into binding international conventions despite the opposition of a few isolated governments that might decry this as an encroachment on their sovereignty.

Arguments that world action against human rights violations in certain countries amounts to intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereignty states smack with anachronism. Humans are humans regardless of where they live and who are their prosecutors. Those who suffer at the hands of regimes that disregard people's human rights are entitled to the same protection that victims of war receive.

The world has established the concept of deploying United Nations forces to protect civilians in war zones. It must also consolidate the right of civilians to international protection if their human rights are being violated, even if at the hands of their own government. A flawed logic is that which rejects the killing and torture of people by foreign powers and apologises for or justifies the infliction of suffering on them by their own governments.

The international community has often committed itself and its agencies to the protection of international justice. It must not shy away from saying bluntly that it will not allow any government to deny its citizens their rights as human beings.

Human rights is an issue that should transcend political borders. Respect for human dignity must take precedence over the respect for political sovereignty. As the international community stands against the transgression on political borders by foreigners, it must reject the violation of human rights by regimes that govern by fear and against the will of their subjects.

The United Nations justifies the launching of war to protect peoples from invading armies. It is time it adopted similar legislation against the murder of people by their governments. The world should not just condemn human rights violations, it must act against them wherever they occur and no matter who the oppressor is. Human life should be more valuable than lines in the sand.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MOHAMMAD SUBEHI, a writer in Al Dustour, said that the Muslim Brotherhood group in Jordan were wrong in suing Khaled Kasheh, the editor of the weekly Al Bilad, for alleged charges that he had tarnished the image of Islam. By so doing, said the writer, the Muslim Brotherhood has done a great service to the government which was seeking excuses to suppress the weekly press. It would be difficult for the Islamic Action Front members of Parliament to stand in the way of government-backed amendments to the Press and Publications Law and the imposition of further constraints on the local press from now on, said the writer. He said that the Muslim Brotherhood should have complained to the weekly Al Bilad about what it considered immoral or anti-religious and demanded that such acts must stop. While admitting that the weekly press in Jordan has blundered on numerous occasions, one should also confess that the weekly press has been successful in drawing public attention to serious issues and has been able to reach other Arab and foreign countries presenting information that reflect the positive and negative aspects of Jordanian life, added the writer. He said what is needed now is an open dialogue between the media on the one hand and the government and other opposition parties on the other and also an internal dialogue within the media community to be led by the Jordan Press Association which can steer the local press in a manner that would be fair to all sides and serving the journalists and their profession.

EXPRESSING TOTAL outrage over the car-bomb explosion in Riyadh this week, a writer in Al Ra'i said that such a final action can never achieve the objectives of its perpetrators but rather help to expose them as terrorists and human. The terrorist explosion, like similar ones in other Arab countries, are bound to win the public anger and outrage and encourage governments to step up their efforts and to collaborate to crack down hard on the terrorists and their supporters and those who finance their operations, said Mahmoud Rimawi. The writer said that opting for criminal and terrorist actions rather than dialogue and democratic means to find solutions to internal problems, the extremist elements are heading towards total failure and complete frustration and century total elimination.

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Time for change in inter-Arab relations

JORDAN'S RELATIONS with the Arab Gulf states are in a continuous process of improvement, as witnessed in last week's visit by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to Bahrain and the arrival in Amman of a new Saudi ambassador after a four-year hiatus. The improvement in ties is only a natural course of events, correcting an abnormal situation in the Arab World, given Jordan's consistent policy of cooperating with all Arab countries and sharing in the Arab World's good and bad days.

Beyond the diplomatic niceties and protocol, what we in Jordan would like to see is a heightened awareness among all Arab countries of the need to stick together rather than allowing themselves to be carried by the current of the day and fall victim to external pressures designed to serve external interests.

If we were to look at Jordan's relations with the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), we could see clearly that there is no hard and fast rule that sets a framework for GCC ties with other Arab countries. For instance, Jordan's relations with the Sultanate of Oman could never be described as having been strained despite the difference in views Amman and Muscat had over the Gulf crisis.

If we come to Qatar, one could see that Doha was first among the rest of the GCC countries to understand and appreciate that Jordan's position during the Gulf crisis had much more than just a refusal to endorse a military option to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait but was based on a realisation that war would not have solved the root problem, and, if anything, would only bring about more confusion and chaos which do not serve Arab interests at large. Sure enough, the situation today speaks for itself of what Jordan had warned everyone five years back.

Let us take the position of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The call by the president of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, for Arab reconciliation and an end to the suffering of the people of Iraq did not come out of a vacuum but out of a clear realisation and appreciation of the fact that there is something seriously wrong with the situation in the Arab World. Judging from the record of the UAE in pan-Arab affairs, it is also clear that Abu Dhabi also understands that disarray is the last thing that the Arab World could afford today, given the pressing need to coordinate positions with a clear vision for future as the politics in the region and international scenes are shifting.

We are being told that the government of Kuwait is in favour of restoring relations with Jordan but it is facing opposition from its parliament and a segment of its people. As such, the reopening of the Jordanian em-

bassy in Kuwait and the upgrading of Kuwaiti diplomatic presence in Amman to ambassadorial level are in the backburner, we are told. Well, it is an internal issue that affects the brotherly state of Kuwait, and we in Jordan can only offer to do what we could to help advance the process of normalisation of relations and cannot play a direct role in influencing Kuwaiti thinking. Things will return to normal in their own course as the political shape of the region is being redrawn and awareness increases of the pressing need for Arabs to get together and chart a course that would safeguard Arab interests.

The Arab-Israeli conflict, one of the perennial features of Arab politics, is slowly on its way out, and new economic realities are being created in the region. Against that backdrop, if Arab countries remained at odds with each other the only losers will be Arabs themselves to the benefit of external forces, which, for long, have coveted the Arab oil wealth and sought to dominate the Arab World.

That has precisely been Jordan's message, implicit and explicit, to the Arab World for decades, but very few actually acted in response to that message while others paid just lip service to the concept of Arab collective action. It could be said that some Arab countries which enjoy huge oil wealth have no reason to lament the absence of joint Arab moves since they do not have any immediate problems in terms of internal pressures. They have enough oil revenues to continuously upgrade the living standards of their people and, for all technical purposes, their vision does not seem to go beyond the oil years. But is that all there is to it? Definitely, no one can actually overlook that living off the oil wealth without actually planning carefully for future does not bode well for the future generations.

In this context, the arrival here last week of Saudi Ambassador Abdullah Soudairi is very encouraging. The Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal, is expected here around Nov. 25, and Prince Saud's visit is in turn expected to lead to setting a date for a summit meeting between His Majesty King Hussein and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia.

For us in Jordan, the expected Hussein-Fahd summit represents a watershed if only because of the possibility that the meeting could be the launching pad for a new Arab awakening to the changing realities on the ground in the Middle East and realisation of the pressing need to adopt collective action. What is important, however, is accepting that the situation in the Arab World today cannot be and should not be allowed to continue.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Writers extol King's achievements, explore post-Rabin Israel

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

EDITORIALS AND articles in the local press focused attention on His Majesty King Hussein's 60th birthday and the King's address in which he criticised the press, as well as development in Israel and the occupied territories after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination and a host of pan-Arab and domestic affairs.

Jordanians have reason to rejoice on the King's birthday to celebrate the numerous achievements they made over the past decades under King Hussein's reign, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer in Al Ra'i daily. From a poor country with limited resources Jordan has been transformed under King Hussein into a modern state with marked progress in various fields, said the writer. For the Jordanian citizens the King's 60th birthday is a real occasion to celebrate because they remember the struggle King Hussein had waged in order to serve his country and people as they look forward with great hope towards further progress and prosperity in the peace era.

King Hussein's birthday marks a milestone in the march towards development in Jordan under King Hussein who spared no effort in leading his countrymen towards modernisation and progress in every field, said Mohammad Qadah, a writer in Al Ra'i. As Jordanians look back on the past decades they feel content with what their country has achieved and they take pride in the King's leadership and in the steps he has taken to enhance democracy and political pluralism, said the writer. Indeed, King Hussein's efforts over the past years have helped make Jordan an oasis of stability and security in a turbulent region, he added.

Referring to King Hussein's criticism of "irresponsible press," Sultan Hattab said that the King was never so angry as he was during his latest speech to senior army officers at the King Hussein Medical Centre. The columnist, who writes for the Al Ra'i, said that King Hussein was not happy because some writers had crossed the red lines, defied the law and violated the National Charter and the Constitution with their writings. By calling on the silent majority to speak up in support of what is right and just and by criticising those elements that do harm to the country, the King wanted to put matters right and to sound the alarm lest the forces of evil succeed in leading the country astray, said the writer. As he always does, the King has pointed to areas where corruption existed and where hostile forces have been acting in the dark to harm the country's democracy.

and nation. No doubt said the writer, the King was referring to forces hostile to national unity and those which use their pens to harm the country's democracy.

In the view of Mohammad Barhouma, a writer in Al Ra'i, the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is bound to enhance the Labour Party's position and its drive to attain a comprehensive peace on all tracks. The writer said that the ruling Labour government will have greater space for political manoeuvres and for winning greater support for its policies especially as the Israeli society has condemned extremists and those behind them and are in favour of the Labour Party's peace endeavours. By including former army chief of staff Ehud Barak in a senior post in the government the ruling Labour Party is bound to win support for its policies from the Israeli military institution which wields great power in Israel, he added.

A writer in Al Dustour supported this view and said that peace in the region is backed by the world community and not only the countries involved in the Middle East conflict. Ali Safadi said that the killing of Yitzhak Rabin was aimed at putting back all steps taken towards peace and the return of the Palestinian land occupied since 1957. Forces hostile to peace and security are now rendered weak and unable to stop the overwhelming support for the Israeli government's drive to attain peace with the Arabs. The writer said that the world leaders that converged on Israel to attend Rabin's funeral carried a message which said that the whole world is behind the peace efforts and is ready to back these efforts by all possible means.

Now that Shimon Peres has been entrusted to form a new government in Israel, it would not be long before we will know the cabinet setup and its plans with regard to the peace process,

said Taher Adwan a writer in Al Dustour. If Peres chooses to give priority to winning support for his Labour Party in the coming parliamentary elections, he ought to carry out Rabin's plans and honour his party's commitment to the achievement of comprehensive peace as was promised by this government in the previous elections, said the writer. But if Peres neglected the peace question especially with the Palestinians and the Syrians and focused his attention on internal affairs only, the results of the coming elections could not be favourable for his party and the future of peace.

A writer in Al Ra'i said that it was the first time for all parties in Israel to show unanimity over entrusting a particular figure to form a new government. Ghazi Saadi said that this gives impetus to the peace process which was spearheaded by Rabin and Peres together. The writer said that since Israel is governed by institutions and not individuals the peace process charted by the Labour government is bound to continue especially as the process has been backed overwhelmingly by the world community. The writer expressed the view that the Peres government will not face any real opposition in parliament and will therefore continue the process of army redeployment in the West Bank, and there is no doubt that the Israelis will enter the final stage of the peace negotiations with the Palestinians in May.

A writer in Al Dustour said that Jordan is in dire need of stringent plans to control excessive public spending because of the country's meagre resources and its need for funds to finance development projects. Taher Adwan said that the ever and continual rise in prices of consumer products and the inability of limited income and low income groups to cope with the situation has rendered most of the Jordanian people living at or below the poverty line.

Struggle on in Labour Party

By Howard Goller
Reuter

TEL AVIV — The struggle for Yitzhak Rabin's legacy has begun in Israel's Labour Party, pitting a respected former army chief against a political maverick.

Acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres, 72, is expected to form a government by next week and lead Labour into elections scheduled for next October.

But as Mr. Peres moves up, taking over from his slain gray-haired comrade, two younger men are vying for the power that might enable one of them ultimately to lead the country.

The two are Interior Minister Ehud Barak, a 53-year-old retired general, and Haim Ramon, the 45-year-old leader of Israel's Histadrut trade union federation.

Israeli newspapers were full of speculation about which jobs Mr. Peres would give them both as the country emerged from the shock and sorrow of Mr. Rabin's killing 10 days ago by a Jewish gunman.

It remains to be seen how each would affect peace moves.

"Neither has been very involved in peacemaking with the Palestinians," said diplomatic correspondent David Makovsky of the Jerusalem Post.

"However, Barak may bring rabbinic caution to the process while Ramon could be an unflinching backer of Peres and his policies," Mr. Makovsky said.

Yet another power seeker is 47-year-old economics minister Yossi Beilin. Mr. Peres's longtime adviser who was key to secret peace moves that led to a breakthrough with the PLO.

Mr. Beilin said the most important thing for him was to help the peace process "in whatever function" he could be a factor in helping to ease the way for either of the other two aspirants.

Mr. Peres, who along with Mr. Rabin kept younger men out of the top jobs for more than two decades, has been cagey about with whom he would like to share his power.

"I can see so many candidates that I wouldn't like to pick out one," Mr. Peres told the Cable News Network (CNN) on Tuesday. Most of the speculation this week has focused on Mr. Barak, a soldier for

most of 35 years — longer even than Mr. Rabin.

Commentator Nahum Barnea wrote in Israel's largest daily Yedioth Ahronoth that around Mr. Barak, people "smell power."

"Defence or foreign affairs, the main thing they see is that the man stands to advance," Mr. Barnea wrote.

"Ramon has a lot of virtues but an army chief he won't be."

A former commando who took part in undercover missions in Arab countries, Mr. Barak is famous for a 1973 foray into Beirut in which three PLO leaders were killed to avenge the murders of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Israeli news reports said he escaped while posing as a woman.

Military sources said Mr. Barak devised many of the army's tactics against the Palestinian uprising that erupted in 1987, targeting leading militants rather than trying to crush the revolt with unrestrained force.

While army chief last year, Mr. Barak met his Syrian counterpart for security talks in Washington that proved unproductive.

Mr. Ramon, a Tel Aviv lawyer who quit as Mr. Rabin's health minister last year after the cabinet withdrew his far-reaching bill for health care, went on to win control of the Histadrut trade unions federation, Labour's traditional power base.

Campaigning as a reformer, Mr. Ramon blamed past leaders for widening the gap between rich and poor. Labour, kicked him out — but later invited him back. He and Rabin remained in touch.

On Tuesday Mr. Ramon announced he was ready to return. But he and Mr. Peres have yet to come to terms on his role.

"I am sure he has something to tell me. I know I have something to tell him," Mr. Ramon said but did not elaborate.

Political commentators widely assumed Peres, keen to lead a tight rein on peace moves, would keep either the defence or foreign affairs ministry to himself and hand over the other.

In security-conscious Israel, the defence minister is off-regarded as more important even than the prime minister.

LETTERS

A nationwide affection

To the Editor:

THE WHOLE nation marked His Majesty King Hussein's 60th birthday with so much joy and spontaneity. The festive mood radiated into the home and hearts of every Jordanian. However, amid the feelings of admiration, respect and dedication, certainly one feeling was dominant: Love, stemming from the very hearts of ordinary people for their leader, who dedicated his life for the betterment of his nation and led it to where it is now. Love and devotion, what marvelous gifts to offer on such a special occasion?

As a foreigner who spent the last 20 years in Jordan, I proudly feel a part of the large Jordanian family, and wish to thank all those who made it possible for me to feel that way. I am sure that many sharing my fate, would also share this feeling of belonging, to a land and peoples that once seemed to be remote and strange. We do rejoice over every single step taken forward in the direction of development and advancement, and objectively assess the enormous progress Jordan has achieved in all spheres of its social life, especially on matters related to the status of women.

I wouldn't like to think how better this world have been a long time ago, if women had a greater role to play in the process of decision making. Yet, it is a wonderful and powerful truth, that women have a lot to offer. Thanks to His Majesty's vision and philosophy that political stability cannot be achieved without social stability, women's presence and active participation in all aspects of our lives have become a reality today. His Majesty's personal encouragement and support will certainly enhance even further the importance of the female factor as an essential element in community life that has become instrumental in the process of transformation dreams into realities.

Mrs. Rumiana Nuseibeh,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Zeroual sweeps Algerian polls

(Continued from page 1)

properly. Another OAU delegate said: "As far as I could see the election was conducted entirely above board." "We were in an area that was formerly a stronghold of the Socialist Forces Front (SFF), one of the parties that boycotted the election, and we were amazed to see how many people voted there. "It just goes to show how isolated we were though because in our area Said Saadi was picking up returns of about 90 per cent, so I am very surprised that nationally he polled so few votes. "But I have not one moment of hesitation in saying that the election seems to have been conducted fairly." The election was the first in the country since parliamentary polls dominated by FIS candidates were scrapped in 1992, unleashing political violence in which an estimated 40,000 people have died.

Mr. Nahnah's spokesman speaking of provisional results before Mr. Ben Messour's announcement said: "I think that this result is false and is far removed from reality. What has taken place in Algeria is out of the ordinary and scandalous, it goes beyond any imagination."

Abdul Razak Makri told French television. Armed groups, who have carried out killings and bombings, had told voters the ballot boxes would become their coffins. But the deployment of thousands of troops and police appeared to have prevented any serious incident.

"I came to vote so that the country would emerge from the crisis and I can participate in building a future for my children," an elderly man, who was the first to cast his ballot at a station in the heart of the capital, told Reuters. Like other interviewed voters, he refused to give his name.

Throughout Thursday, Reuters correspondents and witnesses reported crowds headed in bright sunshine for polling stations. The government had called for a strong turnout in the face of a boycott call by the FIS and the main legal opposition parties, including the Socialist Forces Front (SFF).

The huge deployment of security forces, estimated at 200,000 by diplomatic sources, appeared to have prevented rebels carrying out any of their threats on voting day itself.

But the menace remained: Despite the security, no voting took place in the Islamist stronghold of the Casbah in Algiers. Voters were directed elsewhere.

The people in the warren of lanes and interlinked buildings forming the heart of old Algiers defied the might of France during the 1954 to 1962 war of independence.

On Casbah walls, Islamist slogans exhorted militants to fight on. The slogans included those of the most feared militant group, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA).

"GIA: Fight them. God will torture them in your hands," read one slogan. Another said: "Jihad (holy struggle) will not stop."

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Israeli aviation team visits Qatar

DOHA (AFP) — An Israeli delegation arrived in Qatar on Friday to sign an accord setting up air links for the first time between the Jewish state and a Gulf Arab country, a diplomat here said. Qatar does not have diplomatic ties with Israel but contacts between the two countries have been on the rise and economic links are already in the pipeline. The Israeli civil aviation delegation, headed by Menchem Sharon, arrived in Doha on board a plane of the national carrier Qatar Airways, the diplomat said, asking not to be named. As the two countries draw closer to formal relations, Information Minister Hamad Abdel Aziz Al-Kawari represented Qatar at the state funeral of Israel's slain prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in Jerusalem on Nov. 6. Qatar's interior and foreign ministers met Rabin himself in New York in October. Israel is negotiating with Qatar on plans to open a commercial office in Doha, and last month it signed a letter of intention with the U.S. company Enron to buy Qatari gas.

Mitterrand cancels award ceremony

PARIS (AFP) — Former French President Francois Mitterrand will have to cancel his attendance at an award ceremony scheduled for next Thursday because of his prostate cancer, the ex-president's aides said here Friday. Mr. Mitterrand was to have handed the 1995 Prize of the German Media, which he won last year, to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat at a ceremony in Baden Baden, Germany. The ceremony will also posthumously honour assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, named in October as the co-winner with the PLO leader of this year's award for "exceptional people." Traditionally, the award is presented by the previous year's winner.

Oman girds for sultan's silver jubilee

By Barry May
Reuter

MUSCAT — Qaboos Bin Said grew up in an Arabian nights land of royal privilege and mediaeval privation.

Radio, spectacles and trousers were banned, the gates of the walled city of Muscat were closed from dusk to dawn, no cars drove on the 11 km of roads, and there were few telephones, three schools and one hospital.

As Sultan of Oman, he now rules a country whose judicious investment of its oil wealth has enabled it to leap into one generation from an archaic backwater where slavery was common to a rich oil economy with all the trappings of a modern state.

The sparsely populated country, a land of much scenic beauty and cultural wealth, plans to celebrate his 55th birthday on Saturday as Oman's National Day and silver jubilee.

With its northern neighbour Iran across the Strait of Hormuz, Oman controls the strategic mouth of the Gulf through which half the world's oil is exported by tanker.

Oman's stability as an independent oil producer with daily output of 800,000 barrels is thus of vital interest to energy consumers in the West and in Asia, in particular Japan.

Qaboos' father, Sultan Said Ben Taimur, was overthrown in 1970 after decades of arch-reactionary rule and died two years later in exile in London. Accounts at the time described the succession as a palace coup. Oman says he abdicated.

Sultan Qaboos, eighth descendant of a dynasty that has reigned over Oman since 1744, was 29. Trained at Britain's Sand-

hurst Military Academy, his first priority was to end a protracted insurgency backed by Marxist-ruled South Yemen in the southern province of Dhofar. Britain, Iran and Jordan provided military help.

The Sultan then set about ending the country's isolation and transforming it by putting in place basic elements of a social and economic infrastructure — housing, education, hospitals and communications — which had been resisted by his father.

At the same time Sultan Qaboos pursued an independent foreign policy which led to his meeting late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Oman last year.

Recently he agreed to exchange trade offices with Israel, enabling the Jewish state to establish its first presence in any Gulf state, although analysts said it was too soon to talk of diplomatic relations.

While most of Oman's development of the past 25 years was financed by oil revenues, Sultan Qaboos seeks diversification of the economy away from over-dependence on oil.

He sees the private sector undertaking the greatest role in the country's next five-year plan starting in 1996.

"Our future plan is based on harmony between revenue and spending and keeping the necessary balance between them," the Sultan said earlier this year.

"On this basis the private sector has an important role in actively contributing to economic development."

Oman maintains defence links with the United States, Britain and France. Some 1,500 British officers and NCOS serve with the Sultan's defence and

security forces, according to Jane's Defence Weekly. Some are on loan from Britain's armed forces, others are former British service personnel under contract to Oman.

The U.S. rapid deployment force has use of military bases in the sultanate and keeps equipment pre-positioned for U.S. central command units in the country.

A U.S. electronic surveillance centre in Oman covers the entire Gulf region, including Iran.

Modern Oman refers to Sultan Qaboos' reign as its renaissance.

As absolute monarch he has presided over cabinet meetings and acted as his own prime minister, minister of defence and minister of foreign affairs since 1971.

Two months ago Sultan Qaboos had a close brush with death in a traffic accident in which the architect of the country's financial policies was killed.

Oais Ben Abdulmonim Al Zawai, deputy prime minister for financial and economic affairs, died when a car struck the Sultan's vehicle during a tour of Dhofar province.

The Sultan escaped serious injury. Camels and cattle were sacrificed at the hospital gates by citizens who had kept vigil during his overnight stay for checks.

Kings, presidents and other leaders of the Arab World hastened to Oman to congratulate him on his escape, and the accident raised interest in the question of succession.

But Oman draws a discreet veil over such matters.

Sultan Qaboos was briefly married to a cousin in 1976. They had no children and the Sultan has no direct heir.

Blast probe could take long time

(Continued from page 1)

Gulf. It accuses Washington of keeping forces there in order to control its oil wealth. Meanwhile, a third militant group has announced responsibility for the bombing, the Egyptian opposition paper Al Shaab reported on Friday.

Al Shaab, an Islamist paper that appears twice weekly, published a statement from a group called "Ansar Allah" (partisans of God) promising more attacks until all Americans left Saudi soil.

Monday's bombing "came with the grace of God Almighty as part of our jihad to achieve our demands," the statement said.

"You Americans, our blessed activity will not cease until our demands are met. If they are not, you place yourselves in a war in which there is no mercy," the group said.

The bombing, which has already been claimed by two other previously unknown groups, the Islamic Movement for Change and the Tigers of the Gulf.

Al Shaab said Ansar Allah had claimed responsibility for the bombing of the Israeli embassy in Argentina earlier this year. The paper did not say when or how it received the Ansar Allah statement. The group demanded the

removal of all "occupying U.S. troops" from Saudi Arabia, the immediate release of "all prisoners in Saudi jails," the "lifting of all restrictions by Saudi Arabia on Muslim clergy" and "the implementation of Islamic Sharia law."

It also demanded the liberation of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the blind Egyptian radical cleric, the Palestinian Hamas leader Musa Abu Marzouq, and a third militant, Ramzy Yousef, "all held in American prisons."

Two Americans and a Pakistani remained in critical condition Thursday with wounds suffered in the bomb blast.

Three other Americans reported earlier to be in critical condition have started improving and were off the critical list but there was no word available on their present condition. They include a woman whose husband died in the explosion.

Georgetta Combs, 52, has been drifting in and out of consciousness and has not been informed of the death of her husband William Combs, said an official for the U.S. Embassy who requested anonymity.

Combs, 54, a civilian employee of the U.S. Army, was among five Americans

killed in Monday's blast. One Indian also died, and about 60 people were injured, including 37 Americans.

Of the injured Americans, 11 remain hospitalised — the two in critical condition and nine with less serious injuries, the U.S. official said.

A number of them "have horrendous wounds and face a very long road back to complete recovery," Ambassador Mabus told reporters Wednesday.

While most of the injured Americans had family members in Saudi Arabia to comfort them, that was not the

case for some of the other foreigners who were hurt. "In tragedies like this, you always hope families are around. There is an emotional support that only families can give," he said.

Mr. Mabus said he was moved by the plight of one man in intensive care unit, who was covered in white bandages like a mummy.

"I asked him how he was but he answered, 'I am fine, no problem.' I was moved by the power of the spirit of some of the wounded to overcome stuff like this," Mr. Mabus said.

Israel to quit Bethlehem early

(Continued from page 1)

not previously involved in politics.

"I am a religious man but I am not an extremist. I have never belonged to any faction. I am neutral to all factions. Hamas has political objectives and not religious ones. It is a political group," Mr. Tamimi said.

"I believe in the peace process but I think Oslo (the PLO-Israel peace deal) needs improvement... Abu Ammar (Arafat) is the father of all Palestinians and he has struggled for the cause, but I have my differences with the PLO."

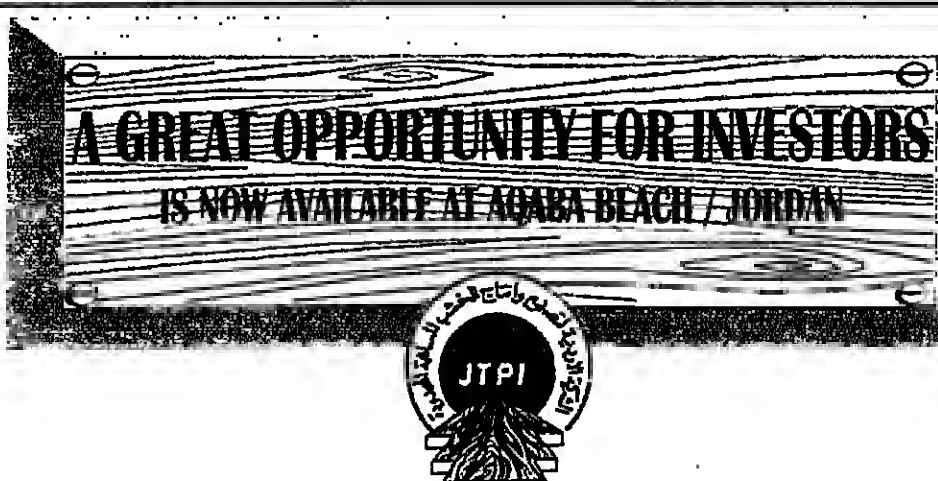
Hamas has led opposition to the Israel-PLO peace deal, Mr. Tamimi said he opposed "suicide and military attacks

such as those carried out by Hamas militants against Israelis."

Under the deal signed in Washington in September extending Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank, Palestinians are expected to hold elections in late January. They will cast ballots for an 81-member council and for a president.

"I will win the elections against Abu Ammar because I have the support of my family and friends," Mr. Tamimi said.

The father of four said he would run as an independent. He added he had already done some campaigning in the self-rule enclaves of Gaza and Jericho as well as in still-occupied areas.



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APEC dodges bullet, keeps free trade plan momentum

OSAKA, Japan (R) — The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum dodged a potentially lethal bullet at its annual meeting on Friday and kept intact a vision of a vast free trade area evolving in the next quarter century.

At the end of its annual two-day meeting, APEC foreign and trade ministers agreed the world's fastest-growing region would open all economic sectors, without exception, to free trade.

And they agreed to make immediate "down-payments" on their liberalisation plans, which will be disclosed at the APEC leaders' summit on Sunday at the medieval Osaka Castle.

Delegates said the agreement, a language minefield, kept going momentum started three years ago when President Bill Clinton hosted the first leaders summit in Seattle.

In a joint statement in Osaka, the ministers reaffirmed the goals and timetable of the so-called Bogor Declaration made in Indonesia last year at APEC's second summit.

The leaders agreed last year to bring their free trade plan into effect by the year 2010 for developed countries and by 2020 for developing ones.

APEC's resident sceptic Malaysia ensured some last-minute drama when International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz insisted all commitments were "voluntary."

For a minutes while a news conference to announce the agreement was delayed, there were hasty negotiations before a decision was taken to insert the word "voluntary."

The drama carried over into the press conference where Ms. Aziz spelled out even more clearly that Malaysia did not believe the 21st century target dates were binding.

Her comments set off a round of questioning about whether the ministers were backing away from their vision.

Japanese Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, however, put an end to the doubt and indirectly rebuked Ms. Aziz when he said the Bogor Declaration was inviolate and the dates and commitments stood — voluntary or not.

Other members, who together account for nearly half of the world's trade, said use of the word "voluntary" was not a sign of weakening resolve and was not an issue for any other country.

"There was a joke during the conference and one minister said it was very much like exchanging vows of marriage. It's completely voluntary but once you have made that choice to marry that's a commitment you better implement," Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said.

The ministers also found their way around the agricultural issue, the topic most

likely to have split the gathering.

Before the meeting, Japan, China and South Korea called for agriculture to receive "special treatment" in the APEC agenda.

Other members were adamantly opposed, saying that giving special treatment to one country's sector meant doing the same for any sensitive sector in the other member economies and would cause APEC to unravel.

Under the compromise hammered out, members agreed to open all market sectors, although they will have "flexibility" in how and when this will be done.

Still, each country is required to make its "down-payment" on liberalisation by announcing initial market-opening measures at Sunday's summit, the first scrawls on the so-called "blueprint" for Asia-Pacific free trade.

Most are expected to announce measures that have already been taken or have already been announced. But some may use the occasion to unveil genuinely new reforms.

U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor has said members have agreed to announce 135 steps in 15 trade areas by the time of next year's summit in the Philippines.

Mr. Kantor also called "just perfect" the vague wording of a controversial pact on non-discrimination in trade after China gave way to Washington.

Lebanon expects EU association accord in a year

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon and the European Union (EU) expect to sign an association agreement in six months to a year following an opening round of negotiations in Brussels last week, Lebanon's chief negotiator has said.

Zafer Al Hassan, foreign ministry secretary general, told Reuters the two sides will hold a second round of talks in Brussels next March at which they will discuss a draft of the proposed agreement which will now be drawn up by experts.

"The EU hopes to finish in six months. I'm not quite that optimistic but there are no major differences between Lebanon and the union," Mr. Hassan said in an interview.

"Our impression is that the EU is favourably disposed towards Lebanon. They understand our problems and would like to help," he said.

Lebanon is one of several Arab and Mediterranean countries negotiating "partnership" agreements with the EU. Tunisia has signed and Egypt, Morocco and Jordan are negotiating.

The accord will set out the terms of political coordination between Lebanon and the EU and its member states on bilateral, regional and international issues.

"This kind of relationship with the EU will not have any negative impact on regional relationships we have with Syria or any Arab group. On the contrary, the union would encourage such groupings," Mr. Hassan said.

The agreement will allow Lebanon to phase its adherence to a Mediterranean free trade zone the EU aims to create, he added.

"One of the aims of the agreement will be for Lebanon to be part of the free zone but this is not expected as soon as the agreement

goes into implementation, but over a period of at least 12 years," Mr. Hassan said.

Lebanon, which imports 80 per cent of its consumer goods — much of them from Europe — and exports only one-tenth of the amount, is particularly vulnerable to a free trade accord.

"We will be allowed to keep some customs duties for a few years, and when emergencies occur we will be allowed to suspend some parts of the agreement to deal with them," Mr. Hassan said.

After implementing the agreement the two sides will meet every five years to assess results and take any steps needed to balance the relationship.

This will include adjusting the compensation Lebanon will receive for loss of customs revenue and increased competition for its enterprises, Mr. Hassan said.

"We will use the assistance that is offered — technical help, investments and financial aid and grants — to help increase productivity in industry and agriculture and improve the quality of products," he added.

Lebanon will also receive help in developing its internal fiscal system to offset loss of customs revenue by introducing a value added tax (VAT).

The free zone will have to be in harmony with the World Trade Organisation which is to replace GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), Mr. Hassan said.

Lebanon has asked to rejoin GATT, which it left in 1950 after the creation of Israel.

The agreement will also cover cooperation in industry, agriculture, the environment and services, including tourism, transport, banking and insurance.

Bank sees 3-year EU currency birth with dual system at outset

FRANKFURT (AFP) — The birth of the new single European currency should last three years and end with twin usage of old and new notes for six months from Jan. 1, 2002, the European Union's (EU's) future central bank has said.

The proposals, by the European Monetary Institute (EMI), were essentially in step with a plan by the EU Commission which was published in May.

The timetable did not pick up an initial preference by the Bundesbank for a so-called delayed big-bang approach under which most of the transitional changes would occur together after a lengthy preparatory period to avoid the burden for banks of double accounting.

The Bundesbank has since qualified this approach, saying that opinion among German banks was divided.

But the EMI's proposals coincided with a warning by five advisors to the German government that the whole programme might have to be delayed if insufficient countries met qualifying conditions.

The so-called five wise men, echoing the official German view, stressed that the timetable must depend wholly on the achievement of the qualifying conditions.

They also said that if the currency could not be launched in 1999, a qualifying founding quorum could be approved later.

The advisors further noted that the only EU countries which currently fulfill the Maastricht criteria for membership of the single currency

is tiny Luxembourg. Even Germany is outside the limit for the ratio between budget deficits and gross domestic product.

The president of the EMI, Alexandre Lamfalussy, backed the thinking behind recent calls by German Finance Minister Theo Waigel for participants to agree a so-called stability pact, and stressed that the whole endeavour depended upon careful selection of which countries qualified under the terms of the Maastricht treaty.

The future central bank set Jan. 1, 2002 as the deadline for the launch of new notes.

The EMI said that the private sector, meaning all types of company and some banks, should have a choice of whether to use the single currency until the transition had been completed.

Its proposals for the transition by the EMI laid down three distinct stages and four key dates.

The process would have to be "relatively simple and easy" if the change were to be credible to the public, the EMI said.

The main preparations would begin early in 1998 and the formal process would last from Jan. 1, 1999, as laid down under the Maastricht treaty, until July 1, 2002.

The proposals are to be discussed by heads of state and government from members of the EU at a European Council meeting in Madrid in December.

The first stage would begin early in 1998 one year before

the formal launch of economic and monetary union (EMU). The main point at this stage would be a decision by the 15 members of the union about which countries qualified for the launch of the single currency.

Countries participating in the launch would also introduce legislation to enact outstanding commitments under the treaty of Maastricht.

The second stage would begin on Jan. 1, 1999 with the launch of the third stage of EMU. This would be marked by the irrevocable fixing of exchange rates of the currencies of participating countries and would last for a maximum of three years, the EMI proposed.

This plan is intended to ensure rapid and widespread use of the single currency for professional non-cash transactions so as to render the process irreversible.

National central banks and the future European central bank would enact monetary policy in the single currency and would promote the new currency on international foreign exchange markets.

The third stage, on Jan. 1, 2002, would mark the most tangible step for the public since it would be the date of the issue into circulation of notes and coins.

Old and new currencies would exist side by side for six months.

From July 1, 2002 national currency in participating countries would no longer be legal tender and would have to be changed for the new currency.

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THE Daily Crossword by Sefton Boyars

ACROSS

- Portent
- Mystery award
- Sublim
- Inside position
- Actor Greene
- Ridiculed
- Woody's son
- Kind
- Israeli airline
- Shack
- Light over the couch?
- Scattered
- Mexican rivers
- Cruise or Edward G.
- Diving birds
- "Like of prancing Poetry" (Dickinson)
- Tenth part
- "Norma"
- So, stale
- Within the law
- Actress Teri
- Baseball stal.
- Studied intensely
- David's weapon
- Of a yellowish color
- Answer
- Russian log house
- Gush
- spy (apple type)
- Clean again
- Leave out
- Fragrance
- Stare at flirtatiously
- Crisissant
- Kind of eel
- Word with guard or admiral
- Breakwater
- Exchanges
- Nole

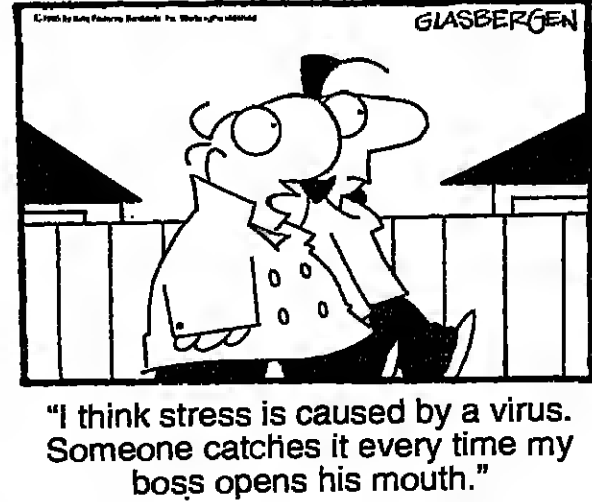
DOWN

- October birthstone
- Additional
- A Fitzgerald
- Light of Broadway
- Jostles
- "Le Coq"
- Expanded
- Lend — (listen)
- Stop signal
- Ultimate words
- Rope for catching cattle
- Cheese
- Cry
- Normal firmness
- Knowledge
- Out
- Ranks
- Puccini's field
- Overused
- Idea man
- Merits
- Twil fabric
- Ebb and neap
- Necessity for night drivers
- Firely
- Rot!
- Graf —
- Scant
- Scatters
- Feathered shaft
- Standard
- Melville opus
- Brook
- Asia's mistress
- Writer and movie critic
- James
- Insult
- Sandwich type
- Traveler's need

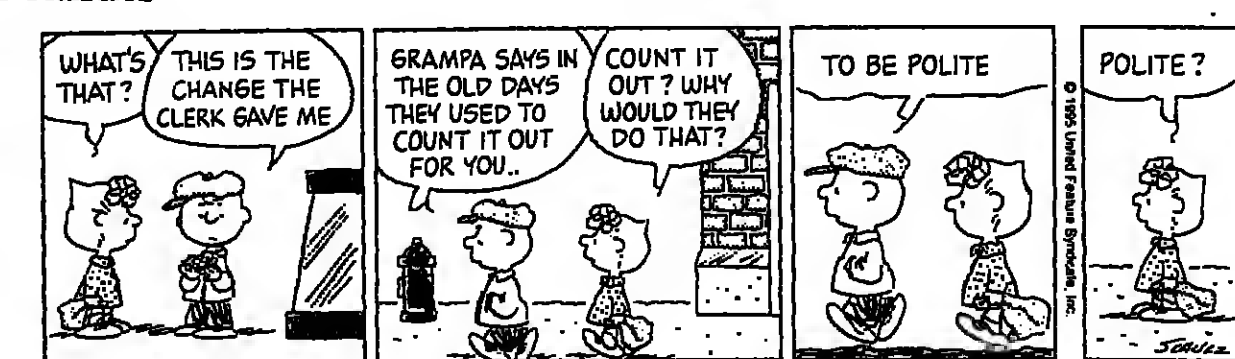
Thursday's puzzle solved

PEAR SLICE LEFT
OMNI CONAN CLIO
MIDDLE OF THE ROAD
PRISONS TARRANT
BEEP NIMES
VILLAS RACK
LOIOT MILE OWEO
CENTROFGRATITY
EATS ASIA O'ENTE
FISIT LENDER
MURIAL SOAS
POLARIS UTTERORE
ROTIENTOITHEORE
ERRS GEORGE ODIN
PLEA SPOOR LENT

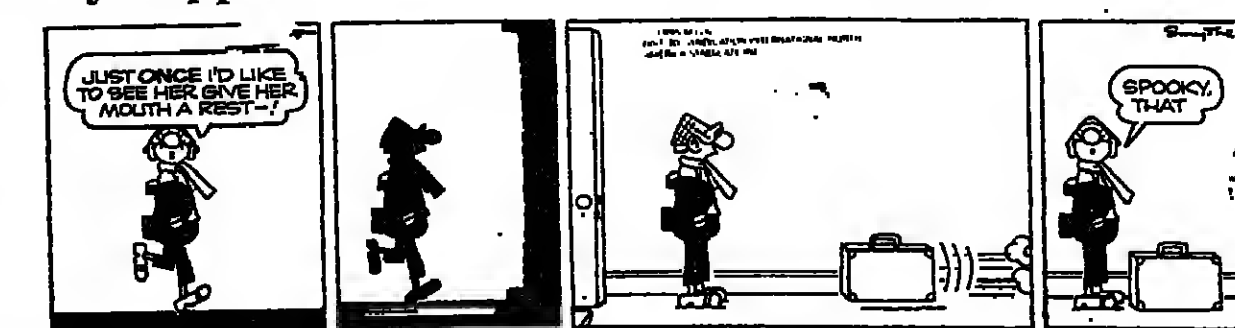
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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You find one difficulty after another today in trying to accomplish something in the morning, but later this evening all goes smoothly.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You want to have a good time in the morning today, but you feel thwarted. By late this evening, all works out to your favour.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A tense situation at home in the morning today can clear itself up by evening and then all goes well, so don't worry about it.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) The afternoon at this time is best for doing marketing, shopping and the like. Pay attention to your wardrobe so that you will look stylish.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study your property and think just how to improve it and make it more valuable. Go over finances and cut down unnecessary expenses.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Conditions may be upsetting in the morning today, but after lunch, all eases up and you can do a great deal of activities towards your success.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Be sensible in handling any adverse conditions which vex you and they are soon solved wisely. Don't hold a grudge over an unintentional slight.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Try to help a good pal who is upset, even if it interferes with what you have planned. Use tact in the handling of personal matters.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Do whatever will make a good impression today on those who have power over your affairs, but do so quietly and tactfully.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be sure you study every angle of that new enterprise you wish to consider before you commit yourself to it. Be most careful in motion while on the highway.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study what promises you have made today and the best way to handle them without getting confused. Patience works wonders.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Show that you are a career individual and you keep an associate from bothering you in your duties. Don't overwork, even at sports.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

Business & Lack of

your

London Exchange

U.S. dollar

1.3536 46
1.4030 40
1.5710 20
1.1358 65
28.84 58
4.8440 90
1588.8 0.3
102.10 20
6.5490 90
6.2000 50
3.4368 25
1.4118 25
0.7393 94
7.7350 40

\$1.5536 48

\$386.30 386

Lack of liquidity depresses trading at AFM

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Trading remained lacklustre at the Jordanian stock market last week, with prices and turnover going down as a result of a crunch on liquidity brought about by the issuance of high-yield certificates of deposit (CDs) by the Central Bank, brokers said Friday.

They said the short-term CDs were drawing cash away from the stock market with an average interest yield of around 8.5 per cent in auction by the Central Bank, which is trying to check the

conversion of dinar holdings in commercial banks into dollars.

The weekly report of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) said volume for the week ended Thursday was 2.7 million dinars, down 41 per cent from the previous week's 4.6 million dinars.

The official AFM index based on 60 major companies closed at 155.22 points, down 1.5 points, or one per cent, from the week's opening of 156.82 points, the report said.

Industrials lost one per cent, services dipped by 1.6 per cent, banks by 0.5 per

cent and insurance by 0.5 per cent, it said.

The report said daily trading for the week (four days of business, Tuesday being a national holiday) was 700,000 dinars compared with 900,000 dinars last week (five days of trading).

In this week's trading 1.6 million shares changed hands under 2,094 contracts.

Industrials accounted for 1.5 million dinars, or 5.57 per cent of the weekly volume, followed by banks with 670,000 dinars, the services sector with 520,000 dinars and insurance stocks with 4,000 dinars.

The AFM report said shares of 85 firms were traded during the week, with only four of them closing with gains while 67 lost and 14 remained unchanged.

AFM dealers and bankers said there was a marked shortage of liquidity in the market.

Misfeh Agel, a senior executive of the Arab Bank, Jordan's largest commercial bank, was quoted in the local press as saying that the weak performance of the market is a direct result of the stringent monetary policy adopted by the Central Bank.

AFM dealers noted that

the Central Bank had announced the sale by auction of 10 million dinars worth of three-month and six-month CDs, and this has drawn cash away from the market. As a result, individual investors who wanted quick cash had to sell at low prices, and hence the decline in prices, he explained.

Other factors contributing to the weak business in the market included a shift of capital from the secondary market to the primary market, with several companies raising capital and others announcing issuance of new stocks.

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Business Daily Brief

A review of news from the Arabic press

Refinery company opens three news centres to distribute gas cylinders

★★ THREE NEW centres at Marka, Um Al Hiran and Al Misdar in Amman governorate will be selling gas cylinders at the official prices of JD 18.5 each starting Saturday (today), the general manager of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company has said. The new centres will be in addition to the distribution centre in the governorate of Zarqa and the Nuweimh station in Irbid governorate. The general manager said the company has purchased 14,000 tonnes of gas which will be arriving by land and sea over the coming ten days. The amount is in addition to the 450 tonnes of gas produced by the refinery and the 100 tonnes imported daily from Iraq, he added. The refinery chief noted that Jordan's gas consumption during the winter season amounts to 900 tonnes a day, double the quantity consumed under normal circumstances during other months. He indicated that the refinery will import 150,000 empty gas cylinders in addition to the 800 cylinders the company manufactures each day and nearly 200 worn out cylinders which are repaired daily (Al Ra'i).

Investors to establish new insurance companies withdraw applications

★★ A NUMBER of investors who were to establish new insurance companies have pulled out while other companies seeking insurance licensing have reduced their proposed capital as some founders opted to withdraw. Twelve companies had announced their intention to submit applications to register new insurance firms but only seven have presented official requests. A committee set up by the minister of industry and trade will be studying all the applications in order to prepare the appropriate recommendations of approval or rejection to the Council of Ministers. According to informed sources, the seven companies have a combined capital of JD 20 million but only one of them will be floating shares for public subscription while the others will be covering their capital from private subscription (Al Ra'i).

Prices of beef to rise

★★ THE COMMITTEE which conducted a fresh study on the prices of beef has reached a decision to increase the price of a kilogramme from 2,800 fils to 3,000 fils to put an end to the black market for red meat. Importers of beef have submitted invoices to the Ministry of Supply from countries of origin showing that a kilogramme of beef arrives Amman at a cost of 2,150 fils and that, as a result, they had to add JD 25 to the price fixed by the ministry (Al Aswaj).

Jordanian-Palestinian trade slows

★★ TRADE EXCHANGE between Jordan and the Palestinian areas grew slowly last month contrary to the three months following the signing of a commercial protocol between the two sides when trade records exceeded JD 32 million. During the month of October only JD 1 million of contracts were signed bringing up the total volume of trade to JD 33 million. Government sources attribute the retreat to hindrances imposed by Israel on the Palestinian National Authority, Jordanian products worth JD 2 million exported to the Palestinian areas were mainly palm oil, textbooks and cement. Imports from the Palestinian lands worth JD 32 million were mainly large amount of fruits, welding roads, electrical parts, honey, vegetable ghee, onions, stones and soap (Al Aswaj).

Two companies merge

★★ THE SPECIALISED Trading and Investment Company (STIC), a public shareholding company and the Consolidated Trading and Investment Company (CTIC) a private shareholding firm, have merged following an approval by the general assembly of the STIC. The merger was agreed due to the resemblance of the activities of both companies as they engage in general trading and manufacturing of local and imported building materials (Al Ra'i - Al Aswaj).

MoGA offers old produce market at Al Wihdat for rent

★★ THE MUNICIPALITY of Greater Amman (MoGA) is asking for bids to rent the site of the old produce market at Al Wihdat. The site has 100 stores and MoGA is seeking JD 300,000 key money and JD 150,000 fixed annual rent for the whole area. Bids are to be submitted by Nov. 20, 1995 at the latest and should be attached to JD 30,000 bid bond cheque to be returned to unsuccessful bidders (Al Ra'i).

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
sterling Pound	1.5625	1.5583**
Deutsche Mark	1.4679	1.4688
Swiss franc	1.1355	1.1406**
French franc	4.1555	4.1555**
Japanese Yen	161.55	161.55
European Currency Unit	1.3615	1.3663**

* USD Per 100 ** European Opening at 9:00 a.m. LMT

General Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 18.11.1995

Currency	Buy	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7688	0.7709
Sterling Pound	1.1033	1.1088
Deutsche Mark	0.5826	0.5851
Swiss franc	0.8216	0.8249
French franc	0.1457	0.1464
Japanese Yen	0.6956	0.6991
Dutch Guilder	0.4380	0.4504
Swedish Krona	0.0445	0.0447
Italian Lira	0.0445	0.0447
Belgian franc	0.0445	0.0447

Other Currencies Date: 18/11/1995

Currency	Buy	Offer
Baharaini Dinar	1.2620	1.2780
Lebanese Lira	0.04450	0.04475
Saudi Riyal	0.1885	0.1898
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2020	2.2670
Qatari Riyal	0.1935	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2100	0.2206
Omani Riyal	1.5250	1.5470
UAE Dirham	0.1922	0.1933
Greek Drachmas	0.2275	0.3125
Cypriot Pound	1.5355	1.5950

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3536/46	Canadian dollar
	1.4030/40	Deutchmarks
	1.5710/20	Dutch guilders
	1.1358/68	Swiss francs
	28.84/88	Belgian francs
	4.8440/90	French francs
	1588.8/0.3	Italian lire
	6.5490/90	Japanese yen
	102.10/20	Swedish crowns
	5.4368/68	Norwegian crowns
	1.4118/28	Danish crowns
	0.7393/98	Singapore dollars
	7.7330/40	Australian dollars
		Hong Kong dollars

One sterling	\$1.5538/48
Gold (ounce)	\$386.20/386.70

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Germany, England, Denmark and Spain seeded in European Championships

GENEVA (AFP) — Germany, England, Denmark and Spain were here on Friday officially made the four seeded teams for next year's European Championship finals in England.

The organising committee for the June 8 to 30 tournament used results from qualifying events of both the 1994 World Cup and 1996 European Championships.

Germany and Spain were the top two teams on this basis, and European governing body UEFA added defending champions Denmark and hosts England.

These countries will be put into a first hat at the draw in Birmingham, England on Dec. 17. The other 12 teams, including the winner of the Euro/Holland play-off on Dec. 13, will be put into a second hat.



Russian Ilya Tsybalar flies over Finland's Jussi Nuocela during their European Championship match. Russia won 3-1 (AFP photo)

European Championship results

Group 1	Group 4	N. Ireland-Austria 5-3	Group 7
Romania-Slovakia 2-0	Croatia-Slovenia 2-1	Albania-Wales 1-1	
France-Israel 2-0	Italy-Lithuania 4-0	Germany-Bulgaria 3-1	
Poland-Azerbaijan 0-0		Moldova-Georgia 3-2	
Group 2	Group 5		Group 8
Cyprus-Belgium 1-1	Czech Republic-Luxembourg 3-0		
Spain-Macedonia 3-0	Holland-Norway 3-0		
Denmark-Armenia 3-1			
Group 3	Group 6		
Sweden-Turkey 2-2	Russia-Finland 3-1		
	Greece-Faroe Islands 5-0		
	Portugal-Ireland 3-0		
	Scotland-San Marino 5-0		

Mistrial declared in Don King fraud case

NEW YORK (R) — A federal judge declared a mistrial in boxing promoter Don King's insurance fraud trial on Thursday after the jury said it was deadlocked, but an appeals court quickly stopped him from releasing the jury.

In a bizarre courtroom drama, U.S. district judge Lawrence McKenna told the jury it must return on Friday morning despite his ruling. After the jury left for the day, McKenna told a packed courtroom that the second circuit of appeals would decide early on Friday whether he should have instructed the panel to keep deliberating. Earlier, McKenna took the unusual step of declaring the mistrial after the jury told him it could not reach a verdict. Normally after the first such notification, a judge will deliver what is called the "Allen Charge" which instructs the panel to keep trying.

McKenna's ruling was also unusual in that the jury has deliberated for only about 10 hours since it received the case late on Monday.

The judge said the jury was "irretrievably deadlocked" and it would be unfair to pressure them to reach a decision because one panelist could not remain past noon on Friday. It was unclear why the deliberations could not continue with 11 jurors or an alternate. All 12 are to return on Friday.

In a note declaring its deadlock, the jury said: "Certain members of the jury, a majority, have reached the conclusion that we are irretrievably dead-

locked and will be unable to come to a unanimous verdict on any of the counts charged."

Federal prosecutors immediately asked the appeals to stop the judge from dismissing the jury.

King has been on trial since Sept. 21 for nine counts of insurance fraud involving a 1991 Julio Cesar Chavez fight that was cancelled. Each count against him carries a maximum five-year prison sentence and a \$250,000 fine.

King, the world's foremost boxing promoter, is accused of padding his claim submitted to Lloyd's of London with \$350,000 in training fee losses that did not occur. The insurance contract covered non-refundable expenses and Lloyd's paid King a total of \$671,000.

Although witnesses said King keeps tight control over his company, insisting on signing cheques for as little as five cents, the promoter testified he had nothing to do with the filing of the claim.

His lawyer argued that King was too busy with other business — such as being concerned with the rape charges against one of his other boxers, Mike Tyson — to care about collecting the insurance claim.

Chavez was scheduled to fight Harold Brazier in 1991 in Las Vegas, but Chavez was injured before the fight and it was cancelled. King allegedly submitted an insurance claim that included \$350,000 in training fees for Chavez.

Prosecutors allege that King never told Chavez about the \$350,000 insurance claim and illegally pocketed the money.

Weightlifting Championships lift off into drug cloud

GUANGZHOU, China (AFP) — A mass doping scandal marred the start of the World Weightlifting Championships here Friday as the international governing body banned 64 lifters for life for drug taking.

The 64 athletes from 31 countries who have tested positive this year — all but two for anabolic steroids — have been notified through their national federations, said International Weightlifting Federation general secretary Tamas Ajan, who provided no names.

Weightlifting is the only Olympic sport that bans drug offenders for life for a first offence.

The IWF decided only after a long discussion at an executive board meeting Wednesday to accept the Cologne results because of the controversial equipment used, said Ajan.

Only the IWF is currently using the new more sensitive equipment for its drug testing, said Ajan.

But if using the equipment exposes weightlifting to attack as a "dirty" sport, then "our reaction is not to use this equipment, but it doesn't make a clean sport," said Ajan.

More than 85 per cent of the 64 positive tests were detected by costly new equipment at a drug-testing laboratory in Cologne, Germany, said Ajan.

The highly sensitive new equipment can detect drugs taken two or even three months previously, he said. Standard equipment can generally detect drugs taken only within the previous three weeks.

Only 17 lifters tested positive for banned drugs last year. "This year the Cologne lab used a very special, highly sensitive mass spectrometer, which had never been used before," said Ajan.

Four countries with more than two positive tests — Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Russia and Armenia — paid \$50,000 fines to be allowed to compete here and at the Atlanta Olympics next year.

According to IWF rules, countries with three or more positive tests within a year are suspended from competition for 12 months or must pay a \$50,000 fine.

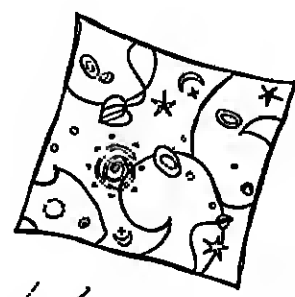
All doping tests carried out at the world championships, which have attracted 497 competitors from 75 countries, will be analysed at the Cologne lab, said Ajan. Results will be available next month.

The top eight finishers from the Guangzhou championships will qualify to send a full team of 10 lifters to the Atlanta Olympics.

The IWF has so far conducted 1,031 tests in 91 countries this year, including 400 unannounced out-of-competition tests. The IWF has asked the IOC to use the equipment at all its accredited labs and at the Atlanta Olympics.

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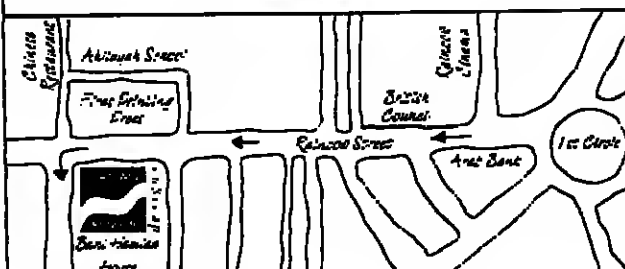
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Graf reaches WTA tour semifinals

NEW YORK (AFP) — World number one Steffi Graf advanced to the semifinals of the \$2 million WTA Tour Championships here on Thursday with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over American Mary Joe Fernandez.

Fernandez put up stiff resistance, but failed in her bid to claim her first victory over Graf in 13 matches.

"It was very even," Graf said. "Her type of game I like to play against. Even though she is aggressive at times, she still gives me time. She requires more time to set up than some other players."

Graf, a three-time winner of the season-ending event, needed only an hour and a quarter to beat Fernandez. In the evening's other quarterfinal, her unseeded compatriot Anke Huber beat sixth-seeded Kimiko Date of Japan 3-6, 6-2, 6-1.

"I think again my serve was very important," Graf said. "I've been very steady. I've been mixing it up quite well. I also played well on the important points."

Graf saved three break points in the fifth game of the opening set and came back to break Fernandez in the next

game for a 4-2 lead. She set up break point with a backhand cross-court passing shot and won the game as Fernandez hit a forehand wide. Graf served out the next game at love and closed the set two games later as her backhand clipped the top of the net and trickled over on set point.

"It was going back and forth until that moment," Graf said of the fifth and sixth games. "We both served very well, so we didn't give each other many opportunities to do anything."

"Although I served well, hers is bigger," Fernandez said. "I wasn't able to get too many opportunities. Against a player like Steffi, if you don't convert right away you are in trouble."

At 4-4 in the second set, Graf recorded the second and final service break on the match. She chipped a backhand return over the head of the charging Fernandez to set up break point and took a 5-4 lead when Fernandez pushed a backhand volley wide.

In the next game Graf finished off Fernandez with an overhead smash into the open court.

Red Sox 1st baseman gets MVP award

NEW YORK (R) — Boston Red Sox first baseman Mo Vaughn has named the American League's Most Valuable Player on Thursday, edging Cleveland Indians outfielder Albert Belle in one of the closest votes in history.

Vaughn received 12 first place votes, 12 seconds and four thirds for a total of 308 points in balloting by a 28-member panel of the Baseball Writers Association of America.

Belle received 11 first place votes, 10 seconds and seven thirds for 300 points. Seattle Mariners designated hitter Edgar Martinez was third with 244 points, and Cleveland Indians reliever Jose Mesa was fourth.

"It's tremendous to get an award like this," said Vaughn. "It still hasn't hit me yet. I never got excited about the MVP Award. I never really was thinking about it."

The election was the closest in the MVP race since 1979, when Keith Hernandez of St. Louis and Willie Stargell of Pittsburgh tied for the National League award.

Vaughn and Belle tied for the league lead with 126 runs batted in.

Vaughn hit 300 with 39 home runs and helped the Red Sox to the Eastern Division title. Belle led the league with 50 homers in powering the Indians to the American League pennant and became the eighth player in Major League history to have 100 extra-base hits in one season. Belle also became the first player in history to have 50 or more homers and doubles in the same season.

"I didn't expect to win this award," said Vaughn. "I just hope to get a job and be the best in the league. To be given this honour is just unbelievable. I did expect Albert Belle to get the award — with what he achieved, it's unbelievable."

Amman hosting Arab Table Tennis Championship

By Aileen Bannayan

Jordan Times Staff Reporter AMMAN — With the elite players of the Arab World representing 16 clubs gathering in the Jordanian capital, the Sports Palace Friday witnessed the opening of the Arab Table Tennis Championship which will take place Nov. 17-22.

The 10 men's teams and six women's teams represent Egypt, Lebanon, Qatar, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Palestine and Jordan. Algeria's teams Friday informed organisers, the Jordan Table Tennis Federation (JTTF), that they would not be able to attend due to technical difficulties.

The men's teams have

been divided into two groups.

Group A includes titleholders Ahli of Egypt, Jordan's Al Orthodoxi, Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli, Kuwait's Al Jahra, and Al Majma' Al Islami of Palestine.

Group B includes Al Zamalek of Egypt, Qatar's Al Ahli, Al Ma'ni of Lebanon, Jordan's Al Jazireh and Al Khartoum of Sudan.

The top two teams of each group will advance to the semifinal round.

The women's teams will play only one round. Participating teams are titleholders Al Ahli of Egypt, Ben-zart of Tunis, Lebanon's Homenmen, Egypt's Al Zamalek, and Jordan's

Orthodoxi and Amman.

The championship, held under the patronage of Minister of Youth Awad Khleifat, was officially inaugurated Friday afternoon.

Several officials of the game, including the president of the Arab Table Tennis Federation, Mr. Mohammad Al Hussein, will be attending the event.

Earlier in the day, men's teams began their matches. Results came as follows:

Ahli (Egypt)-Palestine 3-0
Jazireh (Jordan)-Ma'ni (Lebanon) 3-2
Ahli (Qatar)-Khartoum (Sudan) 3-0
Ahli (Saudi Arabia)-Kuwait 3-1

Saturday's schedule will run as follows:

WOMEN'S MATCHES

Zamalek (Egypt)-Homenmen (Lebanon)
Benzart (Tunis)-Amman (Jordan)
Ahli (Egypt)-Homenmen (Lebanon)
Zamalek (Egypt)-Orthodoxi (Jordan)

MEN'S MATCHES (MORNING SCHEDULE)

Ahli (Egypt)-Kuwait
Ahli (Saudi Arabia)-Orthodoxi (Jordan)
Zamalek (Egypt)-Khartoum (Sudan)
Ahli (Qatar)-Ma'ni (Lebanon)

AFTERNOON SCHEDULE

Kuwait-Orthodoxi (Jordan)
Ahli (Saudi Arabia)-Palestine
Zamalek (Egypt)-Jazireh (Jordan)
Khartoum (Egypt)-Ma'ni (Lebanon)

All matches will be held at the Sports Palace starting at 9 a.m.

Houston's Horry scores 40 points as Rockets slam Bucks 115-87

MILWAUKEE (R) — Houston forward Robert Horry scored a career-high 40 points and Hakeem Olajuwon added 24 as the Rockets slammed the Milwaukee Bucks 115-87 on Thursday.

"This night was an exceptional one for me," Horry said. "I never felt like this before except in my rookie year. I couldn't believe that the Bucks were leaving me open, so I took advantage."

Horry shot 16-of-24 from the floor, 8-for-14 from three-point range, to eclipse his previous career high of 30 points set on April 14, 1994.

Horry dished out nine assists and Olajuwon grabbed 12 rebounds for the two-time defending champion Rockets, who are 6-1 this season. Mookie Blaylock scored 14 and Sam Cassell added 13 and eight assists for Houston.

Houston played without Clyde Drexler, who has a contusion of the right knee. In Orlando, Penny Hardaway scored 30 points and Dennis Scott added 21 as the Magic beat the depleted Indiana Pacers 89-81 in a rematch of last season's Eastern Conference finals.

Orlando extended its home winning streak against Conference opponents to 37 games and defeated Indiana at home for the sixth straight

time. The Magic have the league's best record at 7-1, despite the absence of centre Shaquille O'Neal.

The Pacers played without Mark Jackson, Reggie Miller, Dale Davis and Fred Hoiberg, who served suspensions for their part in an on-court brawl against Sacramento last Friday.

Indiana dressed just eight players for the second straight game and was already without centre Rik Smits, who began the season on the injured list.

In Portland, Mitch Richmond's 18-foot baseline jumper with 22 seconds left lifted the Sacramento Kings to a 105-102 victory over the Trail Blazers, their first win in Portland in nearly 10 years.

Richmond, who finished with 25 points, hit the game-winning shot to give the Kings a 103-102 lead.

Sarunas Marciulionis added 18 and Brian Grant 15 had for Sacramento, which had not won at Portland since January 26, 1986.

Rod Strickland scored 21 of his 23 points in the second half and Aaron McKie added 19 for Portland, which had won 23 straight over Sacramento at home.

At Golden State, Derek Harper scored all 22 of his

points in the second half, 16 in the third quarter, and John Starks added 18 as the New York Knicks routed the warriors 120-97 in Don Nelson's return to the bay area.

Nelson, who resigned last season after six-plus seasons as the warriors' coach, led the Knicks to their fourth win in five games.

Patrick Ewing scored 20 points for New York, which has won four of its last five at Golden State.

Laterall spewell scored 19 points and Tim Hardaway added 15 for Golden State, which lost for the fourth time in five games.

In Los Angeles, Loy Vaught had 19 points and 19 rebounds as the Clippers matched their best eight-game start in four years with a 103-98 win over the expansion Vancouver Grizzlies.

Brian Williams and rookie Brent Barry each added 17 points for Los Angeles, which won its fifth straight and improved to 5-3 to equal its start in the 1991-92 season.

Vancouver lost for the sixth straight time and has not won since starting the season at 2-0.

Byron Scott led the Grizzlies with 18 points. Greg Anthony added 17 points and eight assists for Vancouver, which posted its largest offensive output.

Cleveland sues to keep Browns name

CLEVELAND (R) — If the Cleveland Browns move to Baltimore, the National Football League team will have to get a new name, the city of Cleveland said on Thursday.

The city said it filed a suit in federal court here contending the Browns name has been associated with Cleveland longer than with its current owners, and can't be transferred.

Cleveland Browns majority owner Art Modell announced last week he will move the National Football League team to Baltimore next season if the move is approved by other NFL team owners.

Modell bought a majority interest in the team in 1961 and obtained a trademark registration on the name "Browns" in 1983, the city said.

But the city's lawyer Terence Clark said that "since 1946, the terms 'Cleveland' and 'the Browns' have been inseparably connected. Cleveland wants to keep the name — and under the law they are entitled to do so."

The city says the Browns improperly obtained the registration for the name in 1983, adding that there was extensive use of the names before Modell tried to register them.

In a year that has seen owners shifting lucrative NFL franchises across the country, the federal case is the latest shot from Cleveland. A local judge has a hearing scheduled Monday in a separate state court suit that seeks to hold the Browns to a lease at Cleveland stadium through 1998.

Cleveland would like to keep the Browns in town, find investors who could buy out Modell's interest in the Browns or attract another NFL team.

The mayor, who like many Browns fans here has taken to wearing an orange armband, is lobbying team owners to vote against the move.

The league has not previously halted any team's relocation.

Meanwhile, a "save our Browns" petition drive seeks 2 million signatures to protest the team's move. Local McDonald's Corp. franchised restaurants have mounted the petitions on their walls.

Some companies have cancelled advertising at Cleveland stadium and on radio and television during the Browns' remaining six games — including the Cleveland clinic foundation, an internationally renowned hospital where Modell is a trustee.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMARA HIRSCH
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A4
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Q102
Q86
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SOUTH
852
QAKJ
QK72
Q1098

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1A Pass 1A Pass
1NT Pass 3NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♠.
Don't try to do everything yourself. Look around the table to see if there is someone who will lend a helping hand, albeit unwillingly.

Note that, despite a balanced 15 points, North felt no need to do anything dramatic in the auction. Once the South hand was limited to a maximum, the thought of bidding anything other than three no trump did not even cross North's mind. West led a club, and declarer saw

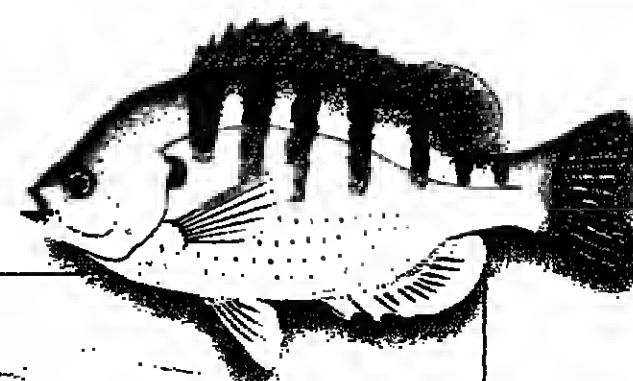
there were possibilities for a ninth trick in each suit — either black suit could break 3-3, or the queen of hearts or ace of diamonds could be with East.

Declarer won the first trick in hand and immediately repeated the club finesse, and it was no surprise to find that there was going to be no more than three tricks coming from the suit. Next came a heart to the jack, but that lost. Declarer won the club return, cashed a high heart, and then tried three rounds of spades. When West showed out on the last, declarer led a diamond to the king. That, too, failed and the defenders took the rest of the tricks — three two.

Declarer could have done better by putting the knowledge that West held long clubs to good use. After the club finesse wins at trick two, declarer should test the spades. When West shows out on the third spade, the contract can be claimed. Declarer cashes the ace of clubs, returns to hand with the king of hearts and exits with a club. West wins and can cash another club, on which South pitches a diamond, but then must lead a red suit to give the declarer the fulfilling trick. At best, the defenders can collect two clubs, one spade and one diamond.

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Croatia, Serbia ready to normalise relations

ZAGREB (Agencies) — Croatia and Serbia — the two key rivals at the start of the Yugoslav wars — have drafted an agreement normalising bilateral relations. Croatian President Franjo Tudjman said Friday.

The agreement on the "complete normalisation of relations between Croatia and Serbia" has been prepared at U.S.-sponsored peace talks in Dayton, Ohio, and will be signed after an agreement is made on Bosnia and a decision has been made to lift international sanctions against Belgrade. Mr. Tudjman told Croatian television.

The news of the breakthrough increased speculation that the announcement of an overall peace settlement for the Balkans could be imminent.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher left Japan Friday to travel to Ohio.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry flew to Ohio. The bolstered U.S. presence at the talks came as lawmakers in Congress prepared to vote on a resolution denying funds for deploying U.S. troops in Bosnia as part of a NATO-led mission to police a future peace agreement there.

A source close to the talks in Ohio said there was a "feel of positive progression" but that the parties were "still jockeying on the map" that will apportion territory between the Muslim-Croat federation and the Bosnian Serb republic in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The negotiations began under U.S. auspices on Nov. 1 but the major sticking point has been the division of territory.

"We have prepared an agreement on the complete normalisation of relations between Croatia and Serbia and it will be signed after the conclusion of an agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina and after the decision to lift sanctions," Mr. Tudjman said in a

message to the nation.

Mr. Tudjman and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, whom many see as the mastermind behind the fighting that has devastated former Yugoslavia since 1991, earlier this month at Dayton agreed to work personally to normalise relations between their two countries.

The last obstacle to normalising relations appeared to be swept away last weekend when separatist Serbs in the last rebel-held area of Croatia agreed to reincorporation into Croatia.

Mr. Tudjman said that the "setting up of regular diplomatic relations" would be of "huge economic importance" for both countries and the entire region, notably because it would open up the possibility of road traffic between southern and central Europe.

Work on a motorway linking the Serbian capital Belgrade and Croatian capital Zagreb was almost completed shortly before war broke out in former Yugoslavia in 1991. The road route, blocked for the four years of war, links Central European countries such as Austria and the Czech Republic with Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.

Mr. Tudjman also said he would cooperate with the U.N. war crimes tribunal, which this week indicted several Bosnian Croats, but insisted perpetrators of crimes against Croat civilians should also be brought to book.

"At peace talks in Dayton the issue of war crimes was raised by the Hague tribunal. The Croatian delegation reiterated it was ready to cooperate with the tribunal," President Tudjman said.

"Croatia will cooperate in finding out the facts relevant for the indicted Croats but demands that the same criteria apply for crimes confirmed against Croat civilians," Mr. Tudjman said. On Monday, the tribunal

indicted six Bosnian Croats, including prominent leaders General Tihomir Blaskic and Dario Kordic, accusing them of crimes against Muslim civilians in central Bosnia in 1993.

The following day, Mr. Tudjman triggered a chorus of international protests by naming Mr. Blaskic, formerly chief of staff of the Bosnian Croat militia, as an inspector in the Croatian army inspectorate.

"We demand objectivity in finding out the facts about (Blaskic and Kordic) ... who had organised the defence of Croatia territory against Serb aggression," Mr. Tudjman said in his address.

Meanwhile, a senior French defence official voiced concern about U.S. planning for a Bosnia peace force, warning that failure to disarm the belligerents and a commitment to withdraw U.S. troops after one year could spark renewed fighting on an unprecedented scale.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, was commenting on preparations for a multinational force of 60,000 troops under NATO command to replace United Nations forces under the peace deal being negotiated between Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia at talks in Dayton.

"We are very happy that we will work under a NATO command rather than the United Nations, because if anyone looks for trouble with us under the expected new rules of engagement, they will just be massacred," the French official told reporters.

"But equally, we are telling our American friends they are making a big mistake if they think the way to keep peace is to create military parity between the Muslims and the Serbs."

"The answer is not, as the Americans intend, to give the Muslims as many artillery pieces as the Serbs have, but to take away the Serbs' guns," he said.



POLLS UNDER TIGHT SECURITY: Members of the Algerian army and police guard a polling station in Algiers during Thursday's presidential elections. Most of the polling stations were set up at schools under tight security (see page one) (AFP photo)

Court refuses to release women held in Rabin case

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — An Israeli district court on Friday turned down an appeal by a woman Jewish settler held in connection with the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that she be freed.

Margalit Harsheli's lawyer, Yair Peli, said after the hearing at a district court in Tel Aviv that his client was innocent.

"In no way was she part of any organisation or did she take any role in any operative step in a criminal act. She is not connected to the shocking murder. None of the information she had was concrete. She did not accept any role nor was anything asked of her," he told reporters at the court.

On Wednesday, Harsheli, 20, of the West Bank Jewish settlement Beit El, was remanded in custody for 11 days.

Police say Harsheli, like confessed assassin Yigal Amir, a law student at the Bar Ilan University, played a central role in the prime minister's murder and plans to attack Arabs.

She is being held on suspicion of conspiracy to commit a crime, failure to prevent a felony and involvement in an illegal organisation which police did not name.

Police have arrested eight young religious Jews in connection with the assassination, seven of whom are in police lock-up. One of them is under house arrest. Harsheli is the only woman being held.

Harsheli, long ponytail swung over her brown sweater, smiled to her parents as police removed her handcuffs when she entered the Tel Aviv district court.

Harsheli's lawyer asked Judge Drora Pilpel to release his client into house arrest or reduce her court-ordered 12-day detention to two or three days.

The judge denied the request after reviewing a cardboard police file, whose contents were not made public.

"The secret material contains accusations of what could be seen as a threat to national security," the police investigator, Zion Sasson, told the court.

Mr. Sasson had told a Tel Aviv magistrate earlier this week that Harsheli was deeply involved in Mr. Rabin's Nov. 4 assassination.

Mr. Sasson has said she was a dominant member of an extremist group led by Amir.

Mr. Peli said Friday that although his client was friends with Amir, she was not involved in Rabin's kill-

ing. "She was shocked, just as all of Israel was shocked by the murder of Prime Minister Rabin," he said. "To the best of my knowledge she was not part of the group."

"Her only obvious crime was to befriend the central suspect... If knowledge of his intentions was a crime then dozens of people should be under arrest," Mr. Peli said.

One of the suspects, Dror Adani, was asked by the gunman to seek a rabbi's blessings for the murder. Adani's lawyer said Thursday.

The rabbi told Adani that under Jewish law Mr. Rabin was a "rodef," or oppressor, but denied permission to kill him, attorney Zion Amir told the Associated Press.

"He was told the rabbi that it was forbidden to touch him (Rabin) or kill him or any other Jew because this could cause a civil war and increase the troubles among the Jewish people," Mr. Zion Amir said.

Police have been investigating whether Yigal Amir had a rabbi's blessing to pull the trigger. Investigators put together a list of rabbis that he knew, but haven't questioned them, police sources said.

One rabbi, Yoel Bin-Nun, has said he knew of colleagues who pronounced Mr. Rabin a "rodef," who should be punished by death. Rabbi Bin-Nun has given names to police.

Also Thursday, a Tel Aviv magistrate ordered another suspect, Michael Epstein, held for six more days while the investigation continues. Epstein is suspected of having known about the assassination plot.

A friend of Amir, meanwhile, said she probably could have prevented Mr. Rabin's assassination. The woman, 23-year-old Hila Frank, had given police vague information this summer about a plot to kill the prime minister, but did not name Amir.

Frank and Amir both studied at Bar Ilan University and met frequently on campus during protests against Mr. Rabin's peace policies.

Frank said that in a chance encounter on campus, Amir, a third-year law student, told her "Rabin has to be killed."

She said she did not take Amir seriously at first, but became concerned when the deeply religious Amir added that, "I've already made my peace with God."

"This set off warning bells," Frank told the Yedioth Achronot daily. "This is what people say when they are near death."

She consulted with a

friend, Shlomo Halevy. The two decided to pass the information on to police, but without giving away Amir.

"If we could turn back the wheel, of course we would have given police all the details about Yigal," Frank told the newspaper. "But who would have thought this would happen? I'm sorry that we tried to protect Yigal."

After Mr. Rabin's death, Frank was questioned by police for six hours and released. Halevy was detained for 24 hours and freed. He has not been charged in the case.

Right-wing extremists plotted to kill two religious leaders for supporting the government's peace policies, according to reports Thursday.

Israel radio, citing the ultra-orthodox weekly Hamahane Haharedi, said extremists planned to shoot Rabbi Yosef Yosef, spiritual leader of the Shas party, outside his house. Shas is in opposition but occasionally supports the government and Yosef is considered a relative moderate.

They planned to join an ongoing demonstration outside Yosef's house and shoot him as he entered but were foiled when Shas supporters dispersed the protest, the radio said.

A planned attack on Shas political leader Arye Deri was called off after Jewish settlers found out and opposed the idea.

Israel radio said Deri confirmed both he and Yosef had received death threats.

A state commission of inquiry into the assassination of Mr. Rabin is to hold its first working session on Sunday, the justice ministry said.

The commission will meet in a building in central Jerusalem renamed Beit Shalom, or the home of peace.

The ministry also said the commission placed notices in newspapers on Friday calling for witnesses to come forward and for the public to produce any documents which could help with the inquiry.

A top Shin Bet intelligence service official who was in charge of Mr. Rabin's protection has already resigned and three other staffers have been suspended for lax security.

The commission, set up by the government and headed by former Supreme Court President Meir Shamgar, held a preliminary meeting last week.

Israeli offices abroad have been instructed to block immigration by extreme right-wing Jews. Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan said Thursday.

Mubarak says no agreement against Khartoum

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak denied there was an agreement with Uganda to take military action against Sudan, the government-owned Al Akhbar newspaper reported on Friday.

Mr. Mubarak told the paper: "This talk is absolutely untrue. Egypt does not conspire with others like they (Sudan) do."

Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir on Wednesday told soldiers heading from Khartoum to fight the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in the south that government troops were advancing towards Uganda.

He told another mass rally on Thursday that members of the country's armed forces were ready to be "martyrs" in defence of their homeland, the government-owned Sudanese radio reported.

Mr. Mubarak called on Sudan to mend its ties with its neighbours for the sake of the Sudanese people who suffer the consequences of Khartoum's isolation.

"Sudan now has problems with Egypt, Eritrea, Uganda and all the countries surrounding it. These problems cause a lot of suffering for the Sudanese people, and we are concerned with the Sudanese people and not the rulers," Mr. Mubarak said.

Relations between Egypt and Sudan reached their lowest after Cairo accused Khartoum of hosting members of a militant Islamic group who staged a failed assassination attempt against Mr. Mubarak in Addis Ababa last June.

Sudan has accused Egypt, Uganda and Eritrea of conspiring to overthrow the "Islam model." General Bashir is leading with the leader of the National Islamic Front, Hassan Al Tourabi, and hosting Sudanese opposition groups.

Khartoum said Mr. Mubarak and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni were "plotting against our Islamic orientation" when the two leaders met in Cairo on Nov. 2.

"Sudan must correct its relations with its neighbours for its own people's sake. But that won't be easy with its internal situation," Mr. Mubarak said.

Khartoum says Uganda has sent troops into Sudan to back southern rebels in an offensive against government rebels begun in late October. Kampala denies the charge.

Uganda broke diplomatic ties with Sudan in April, accusing it of supporting a Christian militant group, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), seeking to topple Mr. Museveni. Eritrea has also severed ties with Khartoum.

Mr. Mubarak refused to comment on the murder of an Egyptian diplomat, Alaaeddin Nazmi, in Geneva on Monday.

"I can't say anything now. Investigations are continuing in Switzerland and I don't want to precede them," Mr. Mubarak told Al Akhbar.

An Islamic militant group calling itself the International Justice Group on Wednesday claimed responsibility for the killing and warned of more attacks abroad.

"We killed him under the law of retaliation, and more death sentences have been issued against others," attached to Egyptian embassies worldwide, the previously unknown group said in a fax to a foreign news agency in Cairo.

Mr. Mubarak also said Thursday he backed Algerian President Liamine Zeroual for reelection in ballots in Algeria.

"I do not know the other candidates, and I do not know if they are capable or not. I know Zeroual. That is why I say Zeroual is a good man," President Mubarak said on French state television.

His comments came shortly after it emerged that Mr. Zeroual had won between 58 and 66 per cent of the votes in the presidential election, according to state-run radio in Algiers quoting exit polls.

Final results announced on Friday showed that Mr. Zeroual swept the polls with more than 64 per cent of the votes (see page one)

Denmark in throes of royal wedding fever

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — Royal wedding fever that has gripped Denmark for months reaches its climax Saturday when Prince Joachim, younger son of Queen Margrethe, marries Alexandra Manley, a British commoer from Hong Kong. Representatives of the courts of Europe and the flower of Denmark's nobility will be present at the wedding of the 26-year-old prince and his bride, who is five years older, in the chapel of Frederiksborg Castle north of Copenhagen. The couple first met in January 1994 at a dinner organised by mutual friends in a Chinese restaurant in Hong Kong, where the prince was spending time with the Danish shipping company A.P. Moeller. They became engaged a year later on a holiday in the Philippines and announced it officially last May. Since then the Danish press has devoted pages to the betrothal and the wedding preparations, and both national television channels will devote 26 hours of programming to the marriage ceremony and the events surrounding it. Danish women have copied the future princess's hairstyle, clothes and jewellery and manufacturers have fallen over themselves to produce souvenirs of the occasion and, better still, get the couple to endorse their products. The state's wedding present is the restoration of part of the couple's future home, the 17th century Castle of Schackenberg near the German border, and an estate of 240 hectares (600 acres) of forests and 700 hectares of farmland.

Message in a bottle travels from Sweden to California

LIJUNGSKILE, Sweden (AFP) — Two little girls who dropped a message-in-a-bottle in a Swedish river two years ago have found a new pen pal — in California, the Swedish News Agency (TT) said Friday. The sisters, aged 10 and 11, put 10 bottles in the Ljungskile River in southwestern Sweden in 1993, hoping to find new pen pals, but eventually gave up hope and forgot about them. Until, that is, a letter arrived from a 13-year-old girl in San Francisco, saying she had found one of their bottles on a California beach. According to experts, the bottle must have travelled some 20,000 kilometres, following the Swedish and Norwegian coasts, coasting north along the Russian northern coast and eastward across the Bering Strait towards the United States.

China performs '1st successful heart transplant

BEIJING (R) — Chinese doctors have carried out their first successful heart transplant on a 48-year-old government employee, the Xinhua News Agency said Friday. Xia Qiuming and Chen Zidao, heart surgeons at the Number 2 Hospital of the Harbin Medical Sciences University in northeastern Heilongjiang province, carried out the operation on Nov. 11, Xinhua said. The doctors cut out the whole of the diseased heart of Zhao Chuanjun and directly connected the new heart to Zhao's pulmonary artery and pulmonary vein, Xinhua said. "I feel rather good, I never had such a wonderful breath before," Xinhua quoted Zhao as saying later. The doctors said it was the first such surgery to replace a whole heart in Asia.